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THE NEW

STATESMAN AND NATION

The Week-end Review

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THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION—The Week-end Review. *Incorporating The New Statesman, The Nation and Athenaeum, Week-end Review.*

THE British and French Governments have both been hesitating to crown General Franco's victories (a disaster for which their policy of "Non-Intervention" is largely responsible) with official recognition of his regime. Mr. Chamberlain has shown scant respect for the opposition to this step which has been so strongly voiced in the House of Commons and by the National Council of Labour outside, and he has refused to give any pledge to consult Parliament before it is taken. He has, in fact, only been waiting for France. There the Cabinet has been sharply divided, and despite M. Bonnet's eagerness it got no further at its meeting on Tuesday than the decision to send M. Bérard back to Burgos to resume his negotiations. A great deal less optimism is felt in France than by Mr. Chamberlain and his friends about the intentions of Franco and the likelihood of the new Spain being Spain for the Spaniards and not for the Italians and Germans. Nevertheless, an announcement is expected early that both the French and the British Governments will grant recognition.

Prospects in Franco's Spain

Mr. Chamberlain's anxiety to conciliate Franco is no doubt based partly on the calculation that the days of the Republic are numbered, that General Miaja and his army, handicapped as they are, can only die speedily as well as uselessly in the last ditch. But that is not all. He shows a confidence, which few of us share, that the new regime will be amenable to the influence of London and not of Rome and Berlin. He is encouraged by the episode of Minorca, where the dispatch of H.M.S. Devonshire and the rapid arrangements for surrender appear to have forestalled a Fascist air attack on the island from Majorca. That may have been a clever stroke; it certainly disconcerted and annoyed Italy and Germany, as the bitter comments in their press have shown. Mr. Chamberlain still believes too in the assurances of the Führer and the Duce that they intend to withdraw all their armed forces from Spain as soon as the war is over. Add to this the notorious Italophobia among the Spanish nationalists, and the outlook (if you ignore the suffering that must be faced by myriads of the Spanish people) may seem pretty bright. But is it credible that Italy and Germany, especially Italy, are going to execute a graceful and complete withdrawal, military and economic, from the Spanish scene? Apart from the inherent improbability of that, there are significant reports of plans by the Fascist Powers for taking a hand in the "reconstruction" of Spain. We have yet to be persuaded that the destruction of Spanish democracy is going to make the world safer and more comfortable for democracy in Britain and France.

The Japanese In Hainan

The Japanese reply to the protest against their seizure of the island of Hainan is that it was "dictated solely by military necessity." "Necessity" is perhaps a question-begging word; but about the military advantage of their occupation there can be no doubt. It will enable them to tighten the blockade on the southern coast of China, and in particular to close the overland arms route to the Chinese interior. But that is not the end of the matter. Hainan in the hands of Japan, and turned into an air base and a submarine base, will clearly be a danger to French Indo-China as well as to Hongkong, and even to Manila and Singapore—a good many hundred miles distant, it is true, yet within reach of air bombers. If the Japanese have more in their minds than the destruction of China's independence (and who will venture to say they have not?) then this step at Hainan may well be of first-rate importance. It appears that the official assurance from Tokio that the occupation will only be temporary, as well as limited in its aims, is accepted in Paris as "satisfactory"—which in undiplomatic language means that France, and the rest of us who are concerned, must make the best of yet another bad job. Japan is not moved by protests, and she has seen little in the conduct of the Western Powers for some years past to make her fear anything else.

The Palestine Conference

The Arabs and the Jews have now put their cards on the table of the Palestine Conference. There is nothing new in their contending claims or in the arguments with which they are supported. The Jews demand the fulfilment in spirit and in letter of the mandate; they insist on the development of the "National Home" and admit no restrictions upon immigration except the economic absorptive capacity of the country. The Arabs oppose the continuance of the mandate and want an "independent Palestine" with all that that implies. There is nothing here to suggest any real basis of compromise, and we wait with curiosity and some anxiety to see what the British Government may have up its sleeve in the way of a plan. Meanwhile, the Arabs have scored a small point in getting the McMahon correspondence published as a White Paper. But we doubt whether this will be a factor of much practical importance. The substance of the correspondence between Sir Harry McMahon and the Sherif Hussein in 1915 has long been known (and an unofficial Arabic version has been published). The dispute turns on whether a passage in a letter of Sir Henry's did or not exclude Palestine from the territory promised as an independent Arab State. The Arabs have always claimed that it did, the Jews say it did not, and Sir Henry McMahon, in a letter to the *Times* a year or two ago, confirmed the Jewish view. It is possible, though not very probable, we think, that the White Paper will throw some new light on what happened twenty-two years ago. But we do not see how it is going to advance a solution of the problem that faces us to-day.

The Papal Succession

In Pius XI the Roman Catholic Church has lost a great Pontiff whose defence of the Faith against "racial heresy" and the Caesarism of the totalitarian States evoked admiration from humane-minded people of all creeds and none. On the choice of his successor much may depend; and, though the Conclave for the election does not open until March 1st, "lobbying" for candidates is already active. That the next Pope will be an Italian is a foregone conclusion. Any other choice would strain the 1929 Concordat beyond the Duce's endurance. According to the so-called prophecies of St. Malachi the next Pontiff should have the cognomen of "Pastor Angelicus." This might be held to fit Cardinal Angelo Dolci, formerly Apostolic Delegate to Istambul; but another view is held that St. Malachi was thinking in terms not of Christian names but of character. Accordingly, there is considerable support for the Archbishop of Florence, Cardinal Dalla Costa, a saintly figure who has played little part in statecraft. If the Conclave decides on a non-political Pontiff the Florentine may be elected. Otherwise the choice seems to lie between the Archbishops of Turin, Bologna and Naples—all, in varying degree, sympathetic to Signor Mussolini's regime. Conclaves, however, have a way of ending in an unexpected election. A State Secretary has never become Pope, but Cardinal Paccelli, a man of unusual ability, may establish a precedent.

Concessions to Commonsense

A House of Commons in which the advocates of good causes can usually only voice their ineffectual protests was enlivened last Tuesday by two victories for common sense, both of which were gained by co-operation among members of all parties. In the first place, Sir Samuel Hoare tabled an amending Bill which is a complete vindication of the critics of the Official Secrets Act. If it is carried, the right of police interrogation, which has been enlarged to so dangerous a degree, will once more be confined to cases of espionage. No new liberty has been won, but an old one has been regained, and both the Home Secretary and the National Union of Journalists, which led the campaign, are to be congratulated on the result. The second triumph for commonsense concerned the 70-year-old Food Controller for London, whose residence in Belgium has been a matter of surprised and indignant comment in the country and in the House. Mr. Stanley, whom misfortune dogs in his pilgrimage from Ministry to Ministry, at first defended the appointment on the ground that in these critical times nothing could be worse than continual changes of personnel. But when it was pointed out that Sir Reginald was not indispensable, and was being paid a retainer as well as his army pension, Mr. Stanley promised to reconsider the position. If he does so, there is little doubt of the result.

Progress in A.R.P.

The announcement that the Government has at last decided to spend £1,000,000 on 50 evacuation camps to accommodate 17,500 children will be welcomed by the whole nation, now that the seaside landladies have been assured that their peace-time use will not compete with their trade. But the scheme, which is still pitiably small, must not be permitted to serve as an excuse for continued delay in the construction of deep shelters. How urgently these are needed was emphasised by the official test at Shoeburyness of the new steel shelters. Their use is clearly limited to rural areas and housing estates where there are gardens in which the shelter can be sunk and

earth with which it can be covered. Even then the effect of concussion upon the occupants is still unknown. Government spokesmen continue to argue that no long-term programme of deep shelters must interrupt the short-term programme of reinforced basements *cum* steel shelters. But in fact in crowded industrial areas the deep shelter is the immediate necessity; and the defence of the garden suburbs could well be postponed, if the profits of the steel industry did not loom so large in the Government's mind. We must wait for the Home Office's decision upon the Finsbury scheme before we can be sure that Sir John Anderson has reversed his predecessor's policy of using A.R.P. as a sedative against panic and decided to make it into a real defence against air attack. Meanwhile we can at least welcome London's new "dictator," Sir Harold Scott, the Chairman of the Prison Commission. Since Mr. Morrison could not accept the post no better choice could have been made.

The Road Crawl

In the annual Road Fund report issued this week by the Ministry of Transport, there is an illuminating passage which goes far to explain the underlying causes of the snail's pace at which Mr. Burgin is fulfilling the Government's promise to modernise the 4,450 miles of trunk roads placed, two years ago, under the Ministry's direct control. In the year 1937-38 attempts were made to acquire 5,000 plots of land needed for the execution of widening and straightening schemes. This involved negotiations with 7,800 separate vested interests; and in the course of the year only 300 deals, at a cost of £162,000, were completed. At this rate of progress it will be nearly a decade before even the pitifully inadequate patchwork improvements projected in 1937-38 will reach fruition. During that year, indeed, only £1,327,000 could be spent on "major improvements and new constructions," although the Ministry now admits that no more than 5 per cent. of the trunk roads within its jurisdiction have the 80-foot width necessary to carry the existing volume of traffic with speed and relative safety on dual tracks. It is clear that the Minister of Transport must be given much more drastic powers to acquire land compulsorily for road purposes; but, if the Bill for purchase of land is not to be intolerable, the question arises whether it might not be more economical to construct new arterial roads through agricultural areas instead of trying to improve the old turnpikes—at the cost of having to pay dearly for every built-up bottleneck.

Consumers' Council

Mr. Woods, who sits in Parliament as a Co-operative M.P., introduced last week the Consumers' Council Bill, which dates back to the days of the second Labour Government. Under this Bill, the Consumers' Council, which is at present virtually impotent, would be given adequate powers to compel disclosure of information about costs and trading margins, and the Board of Trade, acting on the Council's advice, would be empowered to fix maximum prices for staple articles of consumption. The debate inevitably brought forth violent denunciations of the Bill from private trading interests, and an assertion from the Government spokesman that its enactment would imperil the excellent relations now existing between the Government and the trading community. The excellence of these relations is hardly to be wondered at when, in one case after another, the weight of legislation is thrown on the side not of maximum but of minimum prices, and all power to investigate promptly and fully the trading margins of wholesalers and retailers are refused to the bodies supposed to represent the consumers' interests. It may be admitted, as several speakers urged during the debate, that the fixing of reasonable maximum prices is not an easy task. But is it really so much harder than the fixing of minimum prices on a basis fair to the consumers?

London Site Values

The Speaker's decision to disallow the London County Council's Bill for the rating of site values as a private Bill imposed on Mr. Herbert Morrison the necessity of introducing it under the ten-minute rule, which he did on Wednesday. It was, of course, promptly defeated. Its introduction in the present Parliament, could do no more than provide an opportunity for stating a case, and for ventilating a grievance which involves a particular hardship for the L.C.C. Other cities, as their populations spill out over their boundaries, may be able to secure extensions of territory. The Administrative County of London, ringed round by county boroughs and boroughs which refuse to be absorbed, and by counties which fear the loss of their most remunerative areas, is cooped up within the district defined by the Metropolis Management Act of 1855—for so long ago were the present frontiers drawn. The L.C.C. must provide many services for a population far in excess of that from which it is allowed to collect rates; and yet it may not tax the property-owner who benefits by the increased increment of metropolitan growth. Private bill legislation may not be the best possible method of dealing with the problem; but how else is it to be dealt with, until we have a Government which is prepared to legislate for the taxation of urban site values?

The Pigs and Bacon Hash

The Pigs and Bacon Marketing schemes, despite last year's reorganisation, are again in difficulty, as indeed they are bound to be so long as the pork market remains outside the scope of regulation. While farmers are left free to choose, in accordance with short-term market fluctuations, between producing for the bacon market and for the uncontrolled market for pork, it will be impossible to secure for the curing factories an assured and regular supply of pigs at prices fixed ahead so as to give the pig producer a certain outlet at a known return. So far the Pigs and Bacon schemes have been effective chiefly in restricting consumption, without affording the intended stimulus to the home production of bacon pigs. The shortage and irregularity of supplies to the curers have led to restrictions in the opening of new bacon factories, and therewith to a tendency towards monopolistic control of the curing industry. Pig production remains speculative for the farmer, so that the fall in the prices of feeding-stuffs has not been followed by the expected increase in output. In short, the schemes are still in a thorough muddle, and the consumers are farther off than ever from getting an adequate supply of bacon at a price that they can afford to pay.

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THE TWO MILLIONS

SOME day, perhaps, we shall do something about unemployment. But it looks unlikely; matters have been let drift so long that most politicians—even most of those who criticise the Government for its inaction—have come to regard the existence of a huge mass of unemployed workers as a fact like poverty, that we shall have with us always, until the millennium suddenly arrives. Public works, we are told by those in high places, have been proved to be ineffective; and we are witnessing at the moment the ineffectiveness of rearmament to absorb the surplus of labour—and rearmament is, after all, only a peculiar form of public works.

The sharp rise recorded in January in the numbers out of work is, no doubt, to be accounted for partly by seasonal factors and adverse weather conditions, and next month's figures will quite possibly show an improvement. But the position remains serious enough, even if the January total is ignored. Great Britain is now spending money on armaments at a prodigious pace; and the expenditure must be to a considerable extent additional to the ordinary commercial demand for goods and services. Yet in spite of this special reinforcement of the current demand for labour, unemployment is at a substantially higher level than it was a year ago, and the decline is spread over a wide range of industries and services, including iron and steel and engineering, which one would expect to be the principal beneficiaries of the increased demand for instruments of war.

The causes of this further increase in unemployment, beyond a total which was already most disturbingly large, are hardly at all in doubt. Cotton, still our principal exporting industry, continues to plunge downward; it recorded in 1938 a level of exports actually lower than in any year since 1850. The other chief exporting industries have all been further affected by the mounting obstacles to trade, by the uncertainties of the political outlook, and by the general recession which set in everywhere after the short-lived boom of 1937. The continued progress of mechanisation is further reducing the demand for labour, especially in the metal industries and in the mass-producing trades making light consumers' goods. The building boom has passed its peak for some time, and the decline, though gradual, has involved a substantial displacement of labour both directly and in the secondary industries dependent upon builders' demand. The distributive trades, which in recent years have absorbed as much additional labour as all the producing industries taken together, have practically ceased to expand, and are very likely already reducing their total labour force of shop assistants and small shopkeepers regarded as a single group. Unemployment is mounting in the prosperous, even faster than in the depressed, areas—which is natural enough, because these areas cannot stand still. They must either go forward or go back; and as their expansion slackens off they can no longer find jobs for the workers who were needed only because they were providing capital equipment as well as current supplies for a rapidly increasing population.

It is easy enough to explain the growth of unemployment. The question is what to do about it. Manifestly, it would be vain to appeal to the British Government to resort to "pump-priming" on the heroic scale of President Roosevelt's measures. But it is all too plain that the meagre assistance given to the depressed areas through the establishment of Trading Estates, the Lilliputian experiments in land settlement, and the training offered by the Ministry of Labour to a few thousands of men a year, are ludicrously inadequate in relation to the magnitude of the problem. On these lines there is no solution; the tiny achievements here and there serve only to throw into relief the vastness of the unattempted tasks.

Meanwhile in Germany we see the spectacle of a capitalist country that is suffering from an acute shortage of labour, and is showing itself able rapidly to absorb the surplus workers who were unemployed in Austria and Sudetenland before their territories were finally absorbed into the Greater Reich. It used often to be argued that the Nazis had been able to reduce unemployment to almost negligible proportions because of the intensity of their rearmament. But if that is true of Germany, why is it not true here as well? It is doubtless true that the absorption of labour in the armament industries has been an important factor in swelling the German demand for labour; but in face of our own experience we can hardly credit it with having been the main cause of the virtual disappearance of the unemployment problem.

The truth is that unemployment has ceased to exist in Germany, except patchily or in the seasonal manifestations, principally because the demand for labour now depends there mainly not on the normal operation of the profit motive, but on the fiat of the Nazi State. The State orders that production shall take place; and it does take place, under conditions of controlled prices and profits which enable the State to share out the surplus practically at will among the various groups of capitalists. Wages and standards of living are very low; but the low wages are not the cause of the high level of employment, but a result of the diversion of a large part of the national productivity to non-economic or uneconomic ends. The Nazis would raise wages if they could without sacrificing their other objectives; for to offer the people higher prosperity would obviously help to consolidate their power. Employment is high in Germany, not because wages are low, but because Germany is a planned economy, even if it is planned for bad and irrational ends. Employment is low in Great Britain, because we remain planless victims of the higgling of world markets, reluctant to interfere with the working of the profit system even when it desires scarcity and unemployment instead of plenty.

We have, indeed, in our attempts to solve the profit system, reached such a point of restrictiveness that it is becoming difficult to resist the case for further restriction wherever it is advanced. It seems reasonable, when we have given some industries the advantage of minimum prices and quota arrangements, to extend the boon to all the rest. But clearly, though the effect of one restriction scheme, or of a few, in limiting the demand for labour may remain concealed, this cannot be hidden when restriction is made general. Restriction can only help one industry at the expense of others. The more widely it is spread, the larger becomes the volume of surplus labour that has been thrust out of the restricted occupations.

War, no doubt, would solve our unemployment problem again, as it did in 1914. Nothing else seems likely to solve it in the near future—not even the falling supply

of labour consequent on the lowered birth-rate. For this operates solely to reduce the supply of juvenile labour, which is most in demand; and employers, faced with a falling supply of juveniles, are much more likely to increase mechanisation than to engage more older workers. The fact is that our economy needs thorough re-planning, on a basis which will free the demand for labour from the limits now imposed upon it by the private search for profit. Short of a fundamental re-shaping on some such basis as this, all we can do in peace time is to poultice sores, and trust to a liberal credit policy to keep the volume of unemployment within just tolerable bounds. An extensive programme of public housing, road building and educational development, financed out of loans, would of course provide more work while it lasted; but we should only find ourselves slipping back as soon as these efforts were slackened off. The British economic system is obsolete in this new world of planned economies and regulated international trade. Our two million unemployed are the sign of its obsolescence.

AFRICA FACES FASCISM

"BELIEVE, obey and fight." This motto, stencilled on a wall, caught my eye soon after I had landed on Fascist soil. I never forgot it while I remained in Libya. It conveys something of the dynamic discipline that is forming the Italian nation as it marches towards empire. Behind me were my memories of French civilisation in Tunis. It had a tolerance and a kindliness that one cannot rate too high, and many of the French settlers did honestly attempt to achieve "equality and fraternity" in their personal dealings with the Arabs. But in that colony the sense of any collective creative purpose was absent. Its virtues and its failings were those of individualism; what it had achieved was due to private enterprise and *laisser faire*.

In Libya, on the other hand, one could never lose sight of the Fascist State for many minutes together. It plans, it drives, it organises this audacious effort to create from a desert a thriving colony. The will that directs is that of Marshal Balbo, seated in the beautiful palace he has restored. His men "believe and obey." They do it, I think, with alacrity, for everything that came under my notice suggested a promptitude and a pace unusual in the Mediterranean climate. His capital, Tripoli, has been built on a rational plan in a very few years with lavish magnificence and yet on the whole with good taste. From that praise I would exempt its central figure, an equestrian statue of the Duce, brandishing his sword as the Protector of Islam. But most of the modern functional buildings were simple and well-proportioned. Two or three mosques remained to remind the traveller that this modern city was once a decaying Turkish village.

The real effort to colonise Libya dates only from Marshal Balbo's governorship. Little was attempted during the pre-Fascist period, and after the war the whole country had to be reconquered—a task that Marshal Graziani carried out with memorable ruthlessness. The early plan followed capitalistic lines. Large concessions of waterless land were made, which could grow only olives, vines and almonds. Since olive trees yield little during their first twenty years, investors were shy. Under the present plan the State supplies the whole of the necessary capital. It creates for the purpose a controlled corporation (*ente*) to which it makes over the land. Some of this is derelict and ownerless, but for much of it, especially in Cyrenaica, compensation has to be paid to the natives. It is the State that bears the cost of the first clearance of the land, carried out by teams of workers with motor ploughs. It, too, provides the cottages that the settlers will inhabit, and even furnishes them. The corporation, after a respite of nine years, will be expected to repay this capital with interest at 2 per cent. It in turn reimburses itself from the produce of the colonists, who will eventually become the owners of their plots. But the State gives them a third of the value free. The holdings vary greatly in size, according to whether irrigation is or is not available. Some are suited only for dry farming: others on the plains are lavishly irrigated; but mixed farming is the usual plan. On the hills of Cyrenaica wheat can be grown without irrigation. The settlers are carefully chosen from among agricultural workers with a good record. Stress is laid on large families; six persons are a minimum and eight or ten, drawn from three generations, are usual. During the first years of struggle the provident State must care for these settlers, who possess nothing but their labour power. An allowance sufficient for subsistence on a modest level of comfort is paid during the first year; thereafter it diminishes as the land yields its crops. The colonist pays no direct taxes. In the first year of this experiment 1,190 families were settled on the land: in the second year 2,000. It is hoped that these figures may be greatly surpassed as experience is gained. The number of persons settled to date under this scheme is, in round figures, 24,000.

During a day spent in driving over the military road that runs along the coast from Tunis to Egypt, the eye could grasp what this experiment had meant in will and faith. A few miles beyond Tripoli semi-desert began. Nothing grew on the rolling sandhills save rare tufts of esparto grass. The first problem was to fix the shifting sands. Few are the trees that will grow on it, but the Forestry Department was at work with wattle, eucalyptus and tamarisk; round each sapling a hedge of the desert grass had to be planted. Presently, as the road swept past the remains of Leptis Magna, we saw what happens to civilisation in Africa when organised authority decays. The Vandals broke the pride of this great Punic-Roman city, and then the Bedouin camped on its ruins. To-day it is rising again from under the sandhills that had covered its triumphal arches. Much of it is nearly intact, and when Italian spades have finished their work, it will be by far the completest surviving monument of the ancient world. It serves to remind the empire-builders of to-day that what their ancestors once made in Africa they can repeat.

The second technical problem of colonisation is to discover water. Over most of this arid land it is useless to sink surface wells. The artesian well that I saw had involved boring to a depth of nearly a quarter of a mile. An ample stream gushes out, warm and slightly sulphurous. From its basin radiate aqueducts of concrete from which channels water the fields. Barley, clover and several vegetable crops were already well advanced in the second week of the year, and, thanks to sixteen of these wells, the flat landscape was green for miles around. We had reached the colony of Crispi, where 333 families have been settled for a year. Its central buildings were grouped as three sides of an oblong, with a deep tank in the foreground. In the centre was a church, and on either side of it a school and a co-operative store. The rest of the white buildings were devoted to an inn, a post office, a doctor's clinic, and the club and recreation rooms of the Fascist Party. The architecture was simple and bold, in a modern style that suits this climate. Here centred the corporate life of this community. It had no representative council. A very young official in a semi-military uniform managed the affairs of nearly 4,000 souls with only a nominated "podesta" to assist him. "Believe, obey and fight."

The fight with Nature and with the natives was over, however, before the settlers arrived. The block-houses and the defending walls that encircle the little towns need be manned no longer. Machinery and teams of imported labourers had done the rest. At regular intervals, all over the landscape, were scattered the settlers' cottages, as monotonously identical as the cells in a beehive. The architecture, none the less, like that of the bees, was simple and suitable. Each white dwelling had four good rooms, with an outhouse and stable behind it. The mass-produced furniture was

well designed. Though the settlers, when we talked to them, insisted that the work was hard, they seemed to be living on a level of comfort and security well above the lot of the average Italian rural worker. The numerous children, fed on the fresh produce of the fields, were lively and healthy. Their parents showed us with pride the cotton grown in the first year, the promising crops of their second season and the young orange trees, vines and olives that will one day relieve the monotony of their holdings. Each had his mule and three head of cattle.

A cautious observer would withhold his verdict for five or ten years. An economist would have his posers ready, to which the planners would reply with easy indifference; for Fascism has finished with the economic man of liberal philosophy. For my own part I am content to recognise the audacity and magnificence of this victory over Nature. The strategical road, as we returned, pointed again towards Tunis. There life is easier and wells need not sink so deep. The trucks that passed us in the darkness carried military stores.

My homeward road led through Malta. Every stone on this island is graven history, and from neolithic idols and Norman palaces one turned with reluctance to face the present and the future. If ever the Fascist march towards empire should sweep towards Tunis, Malta lies on its track. The Grand Harbour is a superb convenience for a Power that holds the command of the Mediterranean Sea. But Malta is not a fortress that can hold out indefinitely, if its rulers have even temporarily lost this command. Nowhere do peasants hoe their terraces with greater industry, but with 2,500 stomachs to the square mile this island cannot feed itself. To this familiar risk of starvation, is now added the modern terror from the air. In twenty minutes Italian bombers can reach Malta from Sicily. During the Abyssinian crisis the official view was that the island could not be defended, and the intention was to evacuate it in the event of hostilities. That decision has since been reversed; the island will be held and defended, if war breaks out. This layman listened to the cheerful and resolute talk of soldiers and officials, comforted but hardly convinced. To be sure, the civil population, rather late in the day, is now being organised on the familiar A.R.P. lines. It is also true that the Maltese have always built very solidly with stone, and that there is no lack of cellars and tunnels. But the external conditions for defence seem incomparably less favourable than they were when the decision to evacuate was taken. There was then no Axis; the League was still alive and Spain was a free Republic. Nor had the Italians yet equipped the neighbouring island of Pantelleria as a base for seaplanes and submarines. But something is being done. A row of storage tanks stands in the most exposed situation in the island. Some of them have been camouflaged. It may one day occur to someone that the soft sandstone of Malta lends itself to excavation.

Malta in history has had attractions for every rising empire. But for the Italians it is also part of their *irredenta*. Over this claim they have been somewhat silent of late, but in a recent decree regulating mixed marriages in the interests of racial purity, the Maltese, like the Corsicans, were classified as Italians. There is nothing in this claim. Most of the population descends from the original settlers from Tyre and Carthage. The home language of virtually every family, high as well as low, is Maltese, which is certainly by its grammatical structure a Semitic language, mainly descended from Punic though doubtless subject to foreign influences. According to the census, only one person in six claims the ability to speak Italian. The fierce feud which divides the islanders on the issue whether Maltese or Italian should be the official language seems to be largely a class issue. The gentry despise the humble "dialect" of their forefathers; the lawyers like to use a tongue that few understand; the Church sides with the gentry and the lawyers, though in fact no priest ever preaches in any language save Maltese. This powerful party that uses the Italian language as its flag is also ultra-conservative, clericalist and perhaps semi-fascist in its tendencies. It owes its mass support mainly to the Church. But it is, I think, only an extremist group that is in the political sense pro-Italian. The average islander realises clearly enough that the British Empire is the first of Malta's industries.

Within a few weeks Malta will have recovered its lost right of representation, though the elected members will be a minority in the Governor's council. Like Tunis, the island suffers from illiteracy; it lacks compulsory education and its social services are under-developed. Like Tunis also, it pays no income tax. In both cases it struck me that the Powers in possession could do much to assure their tenure against Italian claims by a bolder social policy, more especially in their schools. Fascism is a formidable rival, by reason not of its despotic vices but of its dynamic virtues. Democracy, if it is to hold these colonies, must learn to reconcile its respect for liberty with a creative purpose. H. N. BRAILSFORD

THE PUBLIC AND THE AIR MENACE

CIVILIAN defence against air attack is at last getting the public attention it merits. But there is some danger that the public demand for more protection, as it is now developing, will oversimplify the problem and press for too much of one form of protection to the exclusion of others. Deep shelters are certainly needed at once in many areas, but not everywhere. The Finsbury model has been constructed with great scientific skill, but even if it is the best for Finsbury, which is not certain, it cannot serve as a standardised model for universal use. Shelters must be of many types adapted to local needs and soil conditions. And shelters generally must take their proper place in a general scheme of protection by many methods. The public service rendered by the Finsbury Borough Council, and it is of the greatest value, is that it has given a lead to initiative, experiment and local enterprise. We need then to look at the problem as a whole. May I indicate, necessarily only in bare outline, how I regard it and what are the principles on which I think that action should be based?

"The fate of the nation will be decided not at the periphery of the Empire but at its centre," remarked a distinguished official to me some time ago. It is surely an obvious truth, but it found no reflection in the general proportions of our defence programme as determined by the fighting departments and the Committee of Imperial Defence, without any correction by the late and unlamented Minister for Co-ordination. The defeatist Baldwin slogan, "the bomber will always get through," with its tacit corollary that when it does there is nothing to be done about it, is only now losing its paralysing influence. It is happily untrue. Interceptors and anti-aircraft guns can greatly reduce the number of those that get through —and get back. To make passive defence a manageable task it is essential that they should quickly be made adequate. Let us assume—though the assumption is far from being justified at present—that they will be. Even then many bombers will certainly get through. And it is scarcely open to dispute that the damage they can do constitutes our greatest immediate danger not only of defeat in war, but of war coming. Even after Munich and Spain the prospects for a country meditating attack would not yet be encouraging for a long conflict, though they may be in a year or two. By far the greatest danger of this year is that intolerable demands will be pressed to a point from which there can be no retreat, in the belief, even if it be an illusion, that a quick knock-out blow could succeed. Though we cannot prevent heavy casualties we could make it certain, and quickly, that civilian bombardment could not achieve victory. Till we do so, there is an unreality about the discussion of all issues of domestic or even foreign policy.

This then is our urgent need. Will the Government's policy meet it? The present principles are dispersal; small steel shelters; strengthened basements; trenches; and

limited evacuation, confined so far to children, with some provision of food and transport facilities for others who may flee from the most dangerous areas.

This policy as it stands is clearly altogether inadequate. We cannot contemplate the general economic life of London going on substantially as it does now under the conditions of prolonged air attacks. There are districts in which the working population must certainly be reduced to a mere fraction of what it is at present. There are many regions where steel shelters and strengthened basements are impracticable or quite inadequate. If we imagine, for example, the conditions of work in an important munitions area, subjected to frequent and recurrent bombardment for long periods, with the casualties, destruction and, not least, shattering noise, we shall realise that a respite, such as only bomb-proof shelters can give, will be essential if the lives and morale of the workers are to be saved. Factories may be replaced, or those left may be kept working continuously with successive shifts; but the skilled workers, once maimed or demoralised, are irreplaceable.

How should the present policy be extended? I suggest, in brief summary, along these lines:

1. The planned removal (by comprehensive arrangements extending far beyond what is usually understood by "evacuation"), from the most congested and vulnerable zones, of all except workers in essential industries, and the necessary attendant services, with full protection for those who remain.

2. A careful zoning of areas, within the present general classification, according to degrees of danger. For example the East End of London along the river from the Docks to Victoria is obviously much more dangerous than the outlying Northern or Western suburbs. For such a zone the present evacuation and shelter plans are quite inadequate and it is not enough to remove those who are not engaged in ordinary economic activities. All business except that based upon immovable and essential plants, or supplying the food and other needs of those working in them, should be asked to arrange for staff and records to be moved to other areas. In such zones the remaining population will probably have to be reduced to a third or less.

3. Food, transport and medical aid must be arranged both for the planned evacuation and for the large number of fugitives which must be expected if the arranged evacuation is not completed when the first attacks come. Reception arrangements to be extended through billeting and an increased number of camps.

4. Deep shelters, proof against direct hits and gas, are needed urgently in all specially dangerous zones; under or near munitions and other essential industries; near all docks; in vulnerable districts where the small steel shelters or adequately strengthened basements are impracticable; under busy streets, and for hospital and medical work.

5. Protection by trenches, tubes and underground shelters for street population in dangerous areas to be planned so as to cover all those likely to be in the streets at the peak time. Within a suitable radius round each shelter permanent notices to be exhibited telling the public to go to that particular shelter, so as to obviate the danger of panic rushes and congestion.

6. The deep shelters to be usually small and numerous, so that they can be quickly reached, and to be of different types adapted to local needs and conditions. Their construction to be undertaken at once and carried on with the utmost speed. The unemployed to be used to the fullest extent possible, and the assistance of the appropriate services of the Army (e.g. sappers) to be also utilised.

7. Rapid construction to meet the most urgent needs of protection to be the first consideration. But, subject to that, the deliberate planning, and early commencement, for longer-term defence, of underground systems which have a peace-time value—e.g., additional tubes, underground motor parks, in some cases underground highways and perhaps a central underground London Railway terminus. Some of these might be undertaken at once, e.g., underground motor parks; others, which would involve an excessive strain on our resources during our intensive war effort, should be regarded as in part a replacement of long-term peace schemes. For example, the Bressey road plan might be partly put underground.

This summary represents a personal view. What is needed is the effective means of working out, and pressing home, an agreed policy which will represent the millions who believe that the Government is not moving far or fast enough. Without an organisation for this purpose, public agitation will be one-sided, discontinuous and in the end frustrated. But with it the whole situation may be rapidly transformed. For years individual or party criticism has been knocking at a closed door. Now the door is ajar, though not yet open. If the public can forge an instrument through which its demands can be made continuous, authoritative, responsible and informed, it will succeed.

The new Air Raid Defence League (Fielden House, 10 Great College Street, S.W.1) has been formed for this purpose. It comprises people of all parties and all sections of opinion. It will co-operate with the Government in all they are doing that is useful; it will criticise where their action is inadequate. It will offer an opportunity for the many thousands of the public who, as air wardens or as doctors or in other capacities, have first-hand and first-rate experience of A.R.P. work in their own local areas, to suggest improvements. It will sift and examine their suggestions and press the best of them upon the appropriate authorities. It will, in a monthly magazine, describe what is being done in different districts and in other countries, so that the best may be an example and an incentive to the rest. It is forming technical committees to develop its policy as to evacuation, shelters, medical and hospital arrangements, combatant measures (interceptors and anti-aircraft guns, etc.), food and transport. It has incorporated the National Association of Air Raid Wardens, who will form a special section of the League. But it invites also a general public membership, and while higher subscriptions and donations are welcomed, the minimum membership fee is only 1s. Everyone therefore has an opportunity of helping in a movement which may make a decisive contribution to our national safety just where it is most needed and at the time when it has the best chance of success.

What will be the new League's policy? That will, and must, depend upon those who join and work in it. And here I should like to make a special appeal to the Left. If they join in large numbers, headed by their most influential personalities. they can in a large measure make their own policy the League's, while retaining complete liberty to press any proposals which the League may not accept through their party organisations or by other means. In this way a combination, bringing in influential forces which no single party can alone command, will be a powerful help in securing what they want. THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION expressed an earnest hope, which I share, that the current controversies about forms of *political* co-operation will not cause any hesitation in supporting a *non-political* organisation of this kind. It would be obviously illogical and absurd that they should do so. And it would be very disastrous. For the League's policy must reflect its membership. And if the leading personalities of the Left do not make their influence felt in it the policy is bound to tend more to the Right. In that case only, it might, instead of reinforcing, even hamper in some respects the Left's own policy. But this danger, which I refer to now only because THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION did last week, is perhaps a very slight one since the League's purposes and character have been fully explained. For it is abundantly evident that there is a force of public opinion extending through all parties and sections of opinion which is determined to secure more effective protection than we now have. And if properly organised it can certainly now achieve what it demands.

ARTHUR SALTER

A LONDON DIARY

How quickly the flying dust obscures the real issues in any Labour Party controversy! While Sir Stafford Cripps becomes a recruiting sergeant for the Party, Mr. Herbert Morrison assails his morals and his money, and the other Labour leaders launch a campaign to convert the Liberals to pure Socialism by blackguarding their leaders. Mr. Marchbanks, of the N.U.R., more ingenuous perhaps than his colleagues, declares war on the middle-classes and roundly states that "the Trade Unions are not going to surrender the Party they have assisted to build up to the control of alien influences," while on the same day Dr. Hugh Dalton preaches that a policy of independence and self-reliance by the Labour Party is the right one at the

present time. Deafened by the babel, I escaped for the week-end to the Midlands to meet, not the Trade Unions or the middle-classes or any other of these mass abstractions, but a few real people.

* * *

It so happened that I was booked on Saturday to attend the annual dinner of a Trade Union branch, whose national leaders were strongly anti-Cripps. The first thing which the chairman said to me in a muttered aside was that his members did not want any politics, as many of them suspected that nationalisation meant confiscation. Would I mind keeping clear of these dangerous topics? Of course he was a keen Socialist himself, but I should remember that most of his members were very definitely non-political. I agreed to be extremely guarded and, when I was called on to reply for the guests, ventured to argue the case for public control of the railways. But in the middle of my speech I suddenly realised that I was advocating that very Crippsian programme which Mr. John Marchbanks of the N.U.R. had denounced as a sacrifice of Labour principles, and that I was doing so not to woo the Liberals or the middle-classes but to avoid antagonising sturdy Trade Unionists such as Mr. Marchbanks represents. There is no moral to this story, except that it is typical of the attitude of many Trade Union branches up and down the country, each with its sprinkling of keen Socialists — and sometimes Communists—and its mass of non-political members who can only with difficulty be induced to take any active part in Union activity, not to speak of politics. In a few industries like mining things are different, but taken by and large the Trade Unions, and particularly those for which Mr. Bevin, Mr. Marchbanks and Mr. Dukes speak, are not politically conscious, and I fancy that the minority of their members who are Socialists have little confidence in the Socialism which their leaders preach.

* * *

On the Sunday I went to another city where a National Executive speaker had been addressing a pre-election conference. I gathered that he had not had an easy time even after one delegate had been ejected for disloyally selling the *Tribune*. Here, too, many sound Labour people were puzzled by the speaker's argument that the main reason for rejecting the Cripps' memorandum was that it had "sacrificed Socialism." I, too, am frankly puzzled by the chasm which the National Executive has suddenly found between public control and nationalisation. Surely a Labour Government, faced by tremendous problems of foreign policy and defence, would do really well if it succeeded in bringing finance, transport, power and the armaments industries under public control. I cannot help suspecting that the chasm has been deliberately widened in order to insure the impossibility of Liberal co-operation, or even of local election pacts. Unfortunately the renewed controversy about the Popular Front has thrown the Labour leadership into such paroxysms that the more moderate demands for local arrangements in the South and West are now also in danger of being turned down. In the *Manchester Guardian* this week Mr. A. L. Rowse made a strong case for such arrangements, and demonstrated that, even from the narrowest point of view, they would enormously benefit the Labour Party. Is the Executive's hatred of Liberals so intense that it is prepared to lose seat after seat in order to spite them? If so, they are in danger of destroying their own movement both in the South and the South-West. I am assured that many influential members of the Executive realise this danger, but I have been assured of this far too often to take much comfort from it. If only more of our politicians had the courage to express in public the convictions which they whisper in private, something might be done.

* * *

The lure of "time to pay" is remarkably potent; it appears to induce complete blindness in respect of pitfalls for unwary feet. Some hire-purchase firms, I am told, are now selling goods on the instalment plan *via* a contract "for hire only." The purchaser agrees to pay so much down and so much a month for a specified period. Thereafter he secures not absolute ownership of the goods but an option to renew the hiring agreement indefinitely on payment of a nominal sum yearly. These payments, he is assured, will in practice be waived, so that he becomes in effect the beneficiary owner of what he has bought—just as if he had completed an ordinary instalment plan contract. There is, however, one important distinction. Since the transaction never leads to legal transfer of absolute ownership, it does not come within the purview of the new Hire-Purchase Act. Hence the vendor is absolved from giving any guarantee or implied warranty, as the Act requires, that the goods he is selling are of merchantable quality. They may be utter rubbish and quite unfit for the purpose intended. Furthermore, the seller may import into his "for hire only" contract stipulations (expressly forbidden by the Act) empowering him to resume possession of his wares, if the purchaser is in default with a single instalment, without any reference to the Courts and irrespective of the proportion of the full purchase price paid up to the date of default. All the Act's provisions designed to protect instalment purchasers from "snatch-back" cruelties inflicted by thugs who effect forcible entry go by the board. As the law stands, any hire-purchase trader can defeat Parliament's intentions with perfect legality by using this form of agreement, if he can find clients foolish enough to sign it. I am only afraid that, if payments are made sufficiently "easy," the supply of fools may be considerable.

* * *

A reference in the London Diary last week to the decision of the Staff Common Room Committee of the London School of Hygiene to discontinue its subscription to the *Daily Worker* has brought a long letter of explanation from the Secretary, who feels that a wrong impression was given of an incident of purely domestic interest, which was in fact, he says, handled in a thoroughly democratic fashion. He adds that the decision has since been reversed by the Committee and the *Daily Worker* restored. "Critic" (who is unfortunately confined to his bed this week) asks me to express his satisfaction at this new decision and his regret if he unwittingly did injustice to the Committee.

* * *

The Crisis has already, like the Abdication or the General Strike, produced a mythology of its own. The following story of a little East Anglian village is clearly an example of Crisis folk-lore, though I suspect it is founded on fact. When the Premier made his famous broadcast, the headmaster of the village school decided that the time had come for action. Next morning he telephoned for 15 lorry loads of sand, and when it arrived he paraded all the boys and girls and in a short address explained to them the nation's need. The rest of the day was spent in piling the sand around the school right up to the lintels of the windows. Next morning the A.R.P. officer arrived to inspect the work, and the headmaster explained that he had decided the children would be safer all together in a splinter-proof schoolbuilding than in their unprotected cottage homes. The A.R.P. officer looked round. "Safe indeed!" he snapped. "Give me a board"; and when one had been duly brought, he shoved it carefully through every pane of glass. "Government orders," he said; "windows may splinter even when strengthened with adhesive tape." At first the schoolmaster was nonplussed, then he called the children together and explained that in Emergencies Saturdays could no longer be wasted at play. "Parade to-morrow," he announced, "for further strengthening of the structure." Next morning, the school paraded and found a long line of buckets. "We are now going to protect the roof," said the master, "and I want you to form a line from the sand heap outside, up the stairs along the first floor class room, through the trap door into the attic and out on to the roof." When the school was dismissed at dinner time, there was three feet of sand on the roof. On Peace-Monday the school assembled to find the rain beating through the windows and

down from the roof which had collapsed under the strain of the Emergency. And the County Council is still arguing about who should foot the bill.

* * *

When I read, last week-end, of the Admiralty's decision to approve the issue on all H.M. ships of "two-water rum," I wondered what were the feelings of Admiral Vernon—assuming that B.B.C. news broadcasts reach the Hesperides. That gallant eighteenth-century sailor, who prescribed for the Fleet "three-water rum" in place of previously traditional neat spirit, was wont to wear a handsome and unusual cloak of grogram—a Frenchified stuff of mixed silk and wool. Hence "grog" became 'tween-deck parlance for the Navy's tipple. Would the Admiral salute the "de-watering" of the rum ration as disproof of England's alleged softness? Or would he suspect, as I do, that twentieth-century rum is milder stuff than the issue which "warmed the cockles" before Trafalgar?

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An addition to the collection of Goering stories. "The Field Marshal has got a new uniform—of cellophane." "Why?" "Oh, he wants to show Germany the first bit of fat on view since the Four Year Plan was launched."

POLYCRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to Mary Moltershead.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

Sometimes the question was asked: If they were so certain of peace, if they had such confidence in the Prime Minister's policy of appeasement, why were they rearming? There was the one simple answer that under a democratic system a change of Government was always possible, and as a Socialist Government would mean a war within a month, they must provide against such a contingency. That he regarded an adequate excuse for rearming.—*Smethwick Telephone.*

In this connection, by the way, one hears the unfair accusation that many people are objecting to have the refugee children in their own homes because they will come from a different class. Surely the word class should not be used at all. If it were said that mothers dislike the idea of their children living for a time at least with children from very poor parts, whose speech, ideas, and possibly language may be alien to their standards of what is suitable and gracious, they can hardly be blamed and considered snobbish for that.—*Sunday Times.*

Wanted, pony for six-months-old baby; trained for house and to go with pram.—Advert. in *Times.*

The Committee deplores the fact that unofficial Old Rugbeian ties are being sold with the stripes running the wrong way. These can be sold more cheaply because if the direction of the stripe does not matter, it is possible to cut more ties out of a given piece of material. Members are urged to remain faithful to the official variety.—*Daily Telegraph.*

THE BORDERS CASE

THE judgment delivered by Mr. Justice Bennett on Monday in the case of the Bradford Third Equitable Benefit Building Society *versus* Mrs. Elsy Florence Eva Borders of West Wickham raises issues of considerable public interest. The facts in the case were, briefly, as follows. Mrs. Borders was persuaded by a firm of builders to purchase a freehold house which they had "speculatively" erected. To finance this deal the Society advanced £693, secured partly on the freehold property and partly on collateral deposited by the builders. A mortgage deed was signed by Mrs. Borders, who proceeded to occupy the house. Presently she fell three months into arrears with her covenanted monthly payments to the building society, who sought the Court's leave to foreclose on the mortgage and take possession of the house. Mrs. Borders counter-claimed £500 damages from the Society for misrepresentation as to the value of the house, which, she alleged, was jerry-built and unfit for habitation.

The Society's action failed; but the reasons for its failure were not in fact germane to the issue of public interest. According to the defendant's case, between the date of her application for a loan from the Society and the completion of the mortgage, defects began to appear in the house: the roof leaked, damp spread in the bedrooms and the hot-water system did not function properly. After discussions with the builder's solicitors, she finally executed a mortgage deed "in escrow." That is, it was signed on the understanding that it would not come into force until the defects had been rectified; and a note to this effect, according to Mrs. Borders, was inscribed on the deed. The plaintiffs put in a document purporting to be a mortgage deed signed by Mrs. Borders and her husband and containing no such "in escrow" proviso. The defendants, supported by witnesses, denied that the signatures on this deed were theirs; and the evidence for the defence on this point was accepted by Mr. Justice Bennett in preference to the testimony as to signature given by the agent of a builder engaged in what he described as "fundamentally dishonest" business. In consequence, he held, there was no valid mortgage deed; the mere fact that Mrs. Borders had occupied the house did not mean that she legally "approbated" the terms of the loan which she had conditionally agreed to take; and the building society was not entitled to an order for possession of the house.

So much for the plaintiffs' claim. In support of the counter-claim, Mrs. Borders relied on two arguments—first, that it was *ultra vires* for the Society to lend on the security, in part, of builder's collateral, and secondly, that she had bought the house on the strength of assurances that it was being erected in conformity with the local by-laws, that it had been inspected in course of erection, and that it was built of exceptionally good materials and by good workmanship. These assurances, she contended, were misrepresentations, for which the Society, whose surveyors had made a valuation of the property for mortgage, shared responsibility.

In respect to the first argument, Mr. Justice Bennett held that in granting a loan secured partly on builder's collateral the directors of the Society had violated the Society's own rules, which confined advances to such a sum as could be recovered from the property *per se*. There was, however, nothing in the Building Societies Acts to render partial reliance on third party collateral *ultra vires*. As for the alleged misrepresentation, the learned Judge was satisfied that the house was damp, that there had been failure to comply with by-laws, that the foundations were inadequate and that defects had been deceptively concealed. On the other hand, there was no proof that the Society was responsible for the misleading "sales talk" of the builder. So the counter-claim must be dismissed.

Now, apart from the particular circumstances of this case, the question arises, first, whether building societies may not have gone too far in making it easy, by means of builder's collateral, for impecunious citizens to acquire a house mortgaged up to the eyebrows, with an initial down-payment of a relatively trivial sum. The Borders judgment establishes the legality of this new-model form of building society finance; but is it really in the public interest that purchasers of houses should be able to borrow the normal 75 per cent. of the surveyor's valuation from a building society plus a further 20 per cent. from the same source secured on cash deposited by the builder? This practice has played a considerable part in the 1932–38 hectic house-building boom, and has been responsible for some of the £400 millions' growth in building societies' assets during the past decade. It has meant, however, that many of the societies' debtors are much less substantial people than is desirable and that some societies may be tied up, to a greater extent than is prudent, with the fortunes of individual speculative builders.

The second reflection which is prompted by perusal of the Borders case is that, though the Judge held that there was no proof that the Society was responsible for the builder's misrepresentations, the Society nevertheless felt justified in

lending money on a house criticised by the same Judge as a thoroughly bad building. In how many cases, one wonders, have purchasers bought houses in the confidence that, if a building society was prepared to lend up to 75 per cent. of the surveyor's valuation, they must be acquiring a really durable asset. In some instances that confidence will prove, if it has not already proved, to be misplaced. The fact that a building society is ready to make an advance repayable in, say, fifteen years, means no more than that the society is satisfied that the house will not fall down before the period of the loan's currency has expired. The Bill which Miss Ellen Wilkinson is promoting to revise the Building Societies Acts—dating, as they do, from 1894—would give house-purchasers legal redress against building societies if a dwelling purchased with their assistance, after valuation, proved to be badly built. This would be weighting the scales against the societies; but if their requirements as to building "quality" were more exacting, before loans were granted, it would be a public gain. The leading building societies, to which the public owes much, would undoubtedly welcome legislation designed to check any tendency towards relaxation of standards in this respect.

AYLMER VALLANCE.

THE IMPARTIAL MAN

IT is, I imagine, quite impossible to be impartial. We inherit prejudices from our parents and from their parents, and before we are very old we have acquired a new lot of prejudices for ourselves. While yet in the nursery, we form vehement prejudices against milk puddings or porridge or cold mutton or some other food that is supposed to be good for us. The vulgar Victorians were right in using the word "partial" so often in reference to food, as in the sentence, "I have always been partial to roast pork and apple sauce." For, in matters of food, no human being outside the cradle, whether young or old, has ever been impartial. In childhood, again, we cannot be impartial in regard to the different ways—if they happen to be different—in which our nurses and our parents pronounce the language we are brought up in. In the nursery we are the opposite of snobs, and, if the nurse says, "Sye rylewye, byby," the baby says "rylewye," being prejudiced against the more refined speech of its parents as unnatural. Later on, we become similarly prejudiced in favour of the dialect of the neighbourhood in which we live. The Yorkshire boy looks on the correct English of the south as affected, and, indeed, nearly everyone who is not born in the south of England has an ineradicable suspicion that those who speak with what is called an "Oxford accent" are "putting it on." Even in regard to spelling we cannot be impartial. The great Elizabethans and their successors seem to have spelt their names according to the whim of the moment and entirely without prejudice, but we insist that there must be only one spelling for each name, and we look on a scholar as an ignoramus if he does not give Sir Thomas Browne his "e" and if he spells the surname of Ben Jonson with an "h" There was a pedantic movement in the nineteenth century to spell Shakespeare "Shakspere," but prejudice prevailed, the majority believing that they knew better how to spell Shakespeare's name than Shakespeare knew himself. It is said that correct spelling no longer counts for so much as it once did, but the recent revival of spelling-bees suggests that in matters of spelling the present generation is no more capable of impartiality than its grandfathers were.

The growing child has equally strong prejudices in regard to the street in which he lives, the school of his choice. I myself looked on the boys in the next street, the boys in the other school, collectively as enemies. An impartial spectator would have said that in virtue, in intelligence, and in every respect that mattered, we were all much of a muchness. But we, who were by no means impartial, thought of our rivals as an inferior crowd, men of grosser clay, and, if we had friends among them we simply took it that they were exceptions to the rule. Prejudice, again, decided our sympathies and antipathies in cricket and football. You could not be impartial at a game between Queen's and Albion. Reading the scores in a match between Notts and Surrey, you could not say from the depths of your heart, "May the best team win!" It has been said that everybody is born a Platonist or an Aristotelian. Towards the end of last century, it would have seemed nearer the truth to say that everybody was born a supporter either of Notts or of Surrey.

And the older one grew, the less capable of impartiality one became. Religion, politics, literature—they all became battlegrounds of the prejudiced against the prejudiced. We did not set out to discover the truth about Joseph Chamberlain: if we believed in him, we took it for granted that everything he did was right. Stevenson and Kipling were gods to be worshipped, not writers to be weighed in the scales of impartial judgment. I do not mean to suggest that we swallowed wholesale the opinions of those about us. There were hours of questioning, revolt, conversion. Prejudiced though the young are, they also take a pleasure in shocking the prejudices of their elders. They cultivate heresies as a pastime. They become converted to creeds that, according to their elders, can lead only to ruin. Even with this change of mind, however, they do not cease to be prejudiced. They merely change old prejudices for new. The agnostic—whose name suggests that at last a human being has attained impartiality—turns out as often as not to be as vehemently prejudiced as the Calvinist self he has left behind him. I have known atheists who were so prejudiced against God that they hated him as bitterly as if they had believed in his existence. As a convert to Socialism, I confess, I conceived as strong a prejudice against capitalists as I had ever felt in favour of Joseph Chamberlain. When I wrote about them, I used the epithet "blood-sucking." Though a cliché, it seemed to me the *mot juste*.

Having grown up in this atmosphere of prejudice, I have often wondered whether I should ever in the course of my life meet a truly impartial man. I did not meet him during the Boer War. We were all either passionately pro-Boer or passionately Imperialist. I did not discover him during the Chamberlain campaign for Tariff Reform, when the science of statistics was shown to be as much at the disposal of partial men as the science of theology. As for Home Rule and the House of Lords, what partisans we became! War broke out over Europe, and some people believed that the Germans had committed more atrocities in Belgium than they ever committed, and other people, trying to be impartial, found themselves arguing, to balance matters, that the Germans in Belgium had committed fewer atrocities than they actually committed. Being human, we cannot but take sides. We saw the same thing happening during the insurrection in Ireland after the War. Those who believed that the Irish were right looked on the insurrection as a war for independence; those who took the opposite view called it a murder campaign. You could not even explain the Irish point of view in those days without being accused of being an advocate of murder. Certain historians of the distant past have been called impartial, but who can be impartial about contemporary events? Is it possible to be impartial about the war in Spain or in China? Hardly, while we believe that there is a difference between right and wrong. Impartiality in such circumstances would seem to be merely another word for lukewarmness of principle.

Yet most of us, I imagine, wish to be impartial. We wish to know the truth, good or bad, about both sides, and on any great question long to hear the evidence of a reporter more impartial than ourselves. Naturally, we hope that his evidence will support our opinions, but what we want above all is a man who, whatever his own wishes and prejudices may be, will tell us objectively what is happening in this or that country or in this or that situation. This is known as news, and a large proportion of human beings are eager for news. How often, however, does even news become tinged with prejudice! The reporter on the Right, looking at the same world, sees a different world from the reporter on the Left. What are called facts are seen

through the coloured glasses of conviction. To be impartial at a crisis would be inhuman, and most of the best reporters, it must be admitted, are human. I have often wondered whether it is possible to find an impartial reporter unless we can change human nature.

Even so, I did find him—or I thought I had at last found him—with the arrival of broadcasting. Here is a man, I often said to myself, as I listened to the B.B.C. announcer in the news bulletin, who is as honourably indifferent to right and wrong as a mathematical master is to the respective merits of *x* and *y*. He may lower his voice for a moment or two when making an obituary announcement, but, apart from his prejudice against death, he seems not to take sides about what is happening in the world, but to be concerned only with the question whether it is interesting enough to be worth reporting. In vain have I tried to discover from his voice whether the announcer was an admirer of Sir Thomas Inskip or Sir Stafford Cripps. He showed no sense of outrage as he reported the "alleged" outrages of Japan in China. He would announce, it seemed to me, the forthcoming end of the world in much the same tone of voice in which he announced the choice of the Scottish Rugby team for the next match with Ireland.

I was all the more surprised, therefore, at the recent outbreak of letters in the *Times* accusing the B.B.C. announcer both of partiality and of alarmism. One writer goes so far as to say: "Not only does the B.B.C. give all the disquieting international news, but the announcers seem to enjoy doing so, and the very tone of their voices is warlike." No doubt the same writer detects a note of glee in the announcer's voice during the weather forecast when he reports that a deep depression is moving south from Iceland. Can we not all but see the announcer rubbing his hands in sheer high spirits as he prophesies floods and gales and all manner of meteorological calamities? Another writer, who apparently always turns the wireless off at the nine o'clock news, speaks of "twelve minutes of long-drawn agony . . . calculated to undermine the nervous system." Well, there are agonies in Spain, in Germany and in China that last longer than twelve minutes; and, unless we know the truth about what is happening in foreign countries, we may find it too late to take steps to prevent these agonies from spreading over the rest of the civilised world. It is not the B.B.C. announcer, indeed, who is alarmist, but the condition of the world that is alarming. To conceal news about the unpleasant international situation is no more the function of the B.B.C. than to conceal news about, fires, earthquakes and aeroplane crashes. Let us have the truth, however disagreeable, hoping at the same time that the world will suddenly take such a sunrise turn for the better that the B.B.C. announcer's impartial account of it will sound like Mozart's music in the ear. Y.Y.

Miscellany

ODE

(*In memory of W. B. Yeats*)

SEARCHING thro' my memory of childhood
I am in a dark cathedral
Anglican, The Church of England into which I was baptised,
The Church of my fathers and my forefathers.
Dimly I am seeking for words
Words monotoned among the gothic pillars
Whispering in the foliaged capitals
Spreading along the vaulted groining
"Let us now praise famous men."

I cannot remember when first I met him
That "tall unpopular man,"
That ancient grey-headed eagle
Brow mild with the sky-filled horizon
Also dark-eyed, lizard-lidded
Serpent-mouthed, his tongue darting wisdom.

Strange that I cannot remember
When or how we encountered!
It seems I stumbled upon him
As upon a rock in a clearing
Always there was spaciousness about him
And silence.

As by shadowy waters
The ruin of an old tower
Spreads the silence and the spaciousness of nature
Yeats in the Savile or Athenaeum
Taking his solitary flight
To "perne in a gyre"
Reduced the world to a remote ground murmur.

Indifferent to the machinery of matter
In a motor-car or amid city traffic
As with folded wings
There came to him from the four corners of the earth
Invisible messengers
Muttering their words upon his lips—
The city about him sunk into an eclipse.

Even into a walled garden
In flower-embroidered Penns-in-the-Rocks
Walking with Dorothy Wellesley
Amid the still the starry-eyed gazers
He brought mystery.

The mystery of an antique statue
Aloof, even arrogant amid nature
As an oblong of water
Yet reflecting like the blossoming crab-apple trees
Immemorial light
Hallucinative as from Greece and India
Shining
Upon crumbling Time:
The mystery of the Authentic.

W. J. TURNER

COUNTRY NOTES

A Country Life

LIVING in the country as I do, I sometimes stop short to ask myself where the deepest pleasure is to be obtained from a rural life, so readily derided as dull by the urban-minded. When I stop short like this, it is usually because some of my town-dwelling friends have come to tea and have ruffled my rustic peace with the reverberations of a wider world. They ask me if I have seen this or that play, these or those pictures, and always I find myself obliged to reply that I have not. This makes me appear, and feel, a boor. Then after this most salutary visit they drive off, back to London, and the peace and the darkness close down on me once more, leaving me slightly disturbed but on the whole with an insulting sense of calm superiority. They leave me feeling that I am getting more out of this short life than they for all their agitations, an attitude of mind which strikes me as intolerably self-righteous. How can I possibly justify it? It is surely much more important to concern oneself with the troubles and interests of the world, than to observe the first crocus in flower? It is even more important to take an active part wherever one's small activity would be most welcome, than to grow that crocus? How, then, to explain my backwater's deep source of delight?

I suppose the pleasure of country life lies really in the eternally renewed evidences of the determination to live. That is a truism when said, but anything but a truism when daily observed. Nothing shows up the difference between the thing said or read, so much as the daily experience of it. The small green shoot appearing one day at the base of a plant

one had feared dead, brings a comfort and an encouragement for which the previous daily observance is responsible. The life principle has proved unconquerable, then, in spite of frost and winds? The powers of resistance against adversity are greater than we thought; the germ of life lies hidden even in the midst of apparent death. A cynic might contend that nothing depressed him more than this resoluteness to keep going; it depends on the angle from which you regard this gallant tenacity. For my own part I find a singular solace in the renewal and reality of even the most monotonous of natural processes; I welcome the springing youth of the new season, whether it comes with the first lambs to be born in a snowstorm or with the new buds of the hornbeam pushing the old brown leaves off the hedges. If you have a taste for such things, no amount of repetition can stale them; they stand for permanence in a changing world.

February Frost

Some mornings and evenings lately have enjoyed an extraordinary beauty. The early frosts have glittered as white as a fresh snow-fall, bushes and hedges have been looped with silver threads, and the rime on the tall trees has turned them into frozen fountains. There has been a motionless quality about these mornings, through which the bird-song has chinked as clearly as breaking glass. Under a pale blue sky the white pigeons wheel like a squadron in formation, white no longer but blue in the shadows and gold where the sun catches their wings. I believe that the Chinese fix little devices on to their pigeons, which in flight give off a faint music like a multitude of tiny Aeolian harps. Even without this pretty artifice, there can be few sounds lovelier than the silken swoop of wings as they settle, and their contented cooing almost persuades one to believe that the day is warm. Their pink feet make the frozen grass blades bend; bowing and prinking, they peck delicately for grains, then at an unseen signal they are in flight again, to settle this time in a colony on the tiled roof of a barn.

There is still a film of ice over shady stretches of water, so thin that by mid-day the breasts of the ducks cut with a brittle tinkling sound through it like miniature ice-breakers in formation. By the evening it has closed up again, and now reflects the large lemon-coloured moon in a trance of breathless stillness. Mist rises from the valley, a cold white mist, cutting off everything but the tops of the trees. A solitary swan sails in plumed ghostliness, round and round in the only patch of water left open to him. All else is quiet, shrouded for the long hours of the night which are to follow.

V. SACKVILLE-WEST

INTELLECTUALS IN EXILE

THE totalitarian States are now very fond of the word *autarkie*, and the principle of self-sufficiency which it implies is carried into the intellectual no less than the economic life of these countries. Economically, for all I know, there may be something to be said for the idea; but intellectually it has the whole evidence of history against it. The intellectual poverty which descended on Spain after the expulsion of the Jews and the Moors is the best illustration on the negative side; but positively there is, in the whole history of culture, no significant renaissance or spontaneous outburst of art or learning which does not owe its origin to the reception of some forcibly dispersed race or class. It is no longer the fashion to explain the Revival of Learning as a direct effect of the Fall of Constantinople; but it still remains true that that event typifies a breaking-up of political frontiers and a wandering of peoples which led to the quickening of the intellectual life of Europe. Now in our own time we see a similar process taking place, and it already seems possible that the year 1933 will have the same kind of significance as the year 1453. I shall presently quote some figures which show that we are concerned with a disturbance of intellectual life far more fundamental than that which was caused by the expulsion of the Huguenots from France. That injection of 400,000 sober and industrious French citizens had a considerable and a very beneficial effect on the economic life of the nations which gave them hospitality; but intellectually they were too homogeneous and too strict to have more than a limited effect on the development of the culture of these nations.

The present disturbance is more profound and more varied. Though, in order to give the dog a bad name, the Nazi attack on the intellectuals is always represented as an attack on Jewish intellectuals, in actual fact there is no such racial discrimination. What the leaders of the Nazi movement cannot tolerate is intellectual independence of any kind; and now that six years of domination have failed to produce any indigenous Nazi culture, it is against the intellect itself that they more and more turn their weapons, relying for their own satisfaction on a doctrine of unsanctioned power. It has for some time been obvious that even the Ersatz-intellectual, like Rosenberg, is losing his prestige in Germany, and it was significant that in his Reichstag speech on January 30 Hitler paid tribute to Goering and Ribbentrop, but not to Goebbels. The ideological facade of the Nazi movement always had an artificial air; it proves to be a piece of fake scenery which can be easily pushed out of the way now that there is no need for deception.

In the broad sense of the word, intellectuals are not a very coherent body, and it would be difficult to trace their settlements in the democratic countries. But this does not apply to those scholars whose work lies within the framework of the educational system, and an organisation soon came into force to deal with this particular group. In its provisional form this organisation was known as the Academic Assistance Council; but when it became obvious that its services would be required for an indefinite period, the Council was given a more permanent constitution and became the Society for the Protection of Science and Learning. The most distinguished scholars in this country have felt it as an honour to be associated with its mission, and a strong executive committee is carrying out an effective plan of action. The extent of the problem is indicated by some statistics published in the Society's Report for the year 1937–8. It is estimated that the total number of teachers and research workers displaced since May, 1933, from German universities and institutions of university rank is approximately 1,400. The Society's records show that at least another 418 have been displaced from similar institutions in Austria. In Italy, Czechoslovakia and Spain the full effect of recent events is not yet known, but in Italy, apart from the displacement of German Jewish refugee scholars who had established themselves there since 1933, the new anti-semitic laws have led to the dismissal from Italian universities of at least 140 full-time professors and of a larger, but not yet ascertained, number of junior university teachers.

Of this vast regiment of learning, the Society has already succeeded in finding permanent posts for 524, and temporary posts for another 306. Great Britain and the United States have accommodated the bulk of them (251 and 247 respectively), but most of the democratic countries have responded generously. The only black spot is the U.S.S.R. According to the Society's Report, all the refugee scholars who had been appointed to posts in Russia were displaced and expelled during the period of xenophobia in 1937, and the Society's officers had to make special efforts to prevent some of them being sent back to Germany.

The distribution of these displaced scholars by subjects is of some interest. The practical sciences (medicine, chemistry, physics, etc.) account for more than half; economics is the next largest category, but it is run close by two subjects which present special difficulties—law and art history. Law is obviously difficult because of its nationalist character. Art history is difficult because, though it is a normal subject in German universities, it scarcely exists as a subject at all in this country. The Society has found permanent or temporary positions for 30 art historians, presumably mostly in

America or the colonies; but to my personal knowledge there are still many scholars in this subject who have not found a position and who are existing on small grants, private charity, or the fringes of the art trade.

What should next be realised is that there are hundreds of intellectuals who do not come under the academic aegis, and whose lot is still more precarious. Journalists, novelists, poets, painters and sculptors—they were born to a precarious existence, and the economic position of their colleagues in the democratic countries is not one which even the exile can envy. But though they must take their chance in an open and indifferent market, there are certain amenities which a hospitable people might provide. A German or Austrian painter cannot continue his career in the third-floor-back of a Belsize Park boarding-house; writers have to overcome the handicap which the cost of translation puts on their work; and generally these dispersed intellectuals need a focus for their activities, a centre where they may meet for discussions, concerts, plays and other intellectual activities. To provide these amenities is the purpose of the recently formed Arden Society, which, in the person of the Archbishop of York, shares a President with the Society for the Protection of Science and Learning, and has a council of distinguished writers and artists. In his speech at the inaugural dinner of this Society last week, the Archbishop pointed out that the arts were the only medium through which nations could come to a mutual understanding of each other's peculiar characteristics, and the presence of so many foreign writers and artists in our midst offers an exceptional opportunity for the interchange of cultural values. But nothing will happen unless there is a practical organisation to effect this interchange, and it is for this reason that the appeals issued by the two Societies should not be ignored by those who look forward to a rebuilding of European civilisation. It is gratifying to be able to announce that the appeal issued on February 7th by the Society for the Protection of Science and Learning has already brought in between £8,000 and £9,000, but a much larger sum is necessary if the Society is to fulfil its functions. HERBERT READ

THE MOVIES

"The Dawn Patrol," at the Warner
"Joueur d'Echecs," at the Berkeley
"The Outsider," at the Regal
"Out West with the Hardys," at the Empire

AT last a good film. *The Dawn Patrol* has all the merits that ensured the success of *Journey's End*, and its reality like that of the play, is instantly recognisable even to those who have had no experience of the front. It is thus, we instinctively feel, that Englishmen would and do behave under the stress of mortal danger; neither the humour nor the heroism is forced. The story is of a squadron of the Royal Flying Corps whose duty it is to patrol one of the most perilous sectors of the French line. The men are in a desperate position, for their planes are inefficient and they face not merely a barrage of anti-aircraft fire but a crack German squadron under the brilliant von Richter. Major Brand (Basil Rathbone), who knows the situation to be desperate, is compelled first to order and then to await the inevitable slaughter of his finest men; every day he counts up on his fingers the roar of the returning planes and every day the number is short. His protests to Headquarters are useless; and it is one of the film's many subtleties that we never see a brass-hat, but merely hear the thin, formal, inflexible voice repeating over the telephone its distant injunctions: "sending replacements . . . can't be helped, they are the best men we can find . . . those are your orders . . . do as you're told . . . good-bye." The replacements are mere children, "green kids" just out of school who have done—how many hours of flying, asks Major Brand? "Thirteen . . . nine and a half . . . seven." The nerves of the commanding officer are shattered by the responsibility of sending these boys up to their death on their first day; and when Brand is relieved, the unenviable task falls first to Capt. Courtney (Errol Flynn), then to Capt. Scott (David Niven). The film allows no prospect of release to palliate the horrors, and its last scene shows Scott, almost dazed by the death first of Courtney and then of his own brother, welcoming a fresh wagon-load of eager youngsters with the same old routine of cheerful informality.

The Dawn Patrol seems to me to contain scarcely a false note; even the references to the futility of war are plausibly and naturally introduced and the scene in which a captured German officer (Carl Esmond) is entertained avoids all the pitfalls of this trite situation. Edmond Goulding has made an excellent job of the direction, and he has been well served by his cast: Errol Flynn and Basil Rathbone distinguish themselves, and a memorable performance comes from David Niven as the universally beloved "Scotto." "Scotto" is one of those characters without whom a picture of war conditions would be incomplete: the soul of all good nature and good fellowship, he has the gift of making a ghastly situation not only tolerable but at moments almost preferable to the shabby humdrum of ordinary life. Intellectuals are inclined to neglect this aspect of war, or to call it romanticism; but call it what you will, it is not truly intelligent to deny that the ordinary man experienced during the last war moments of tremendous happiness unlike anything he knew in peace; and a realistic government should face this fact, and attempt to find some channel in time of peace for the innate desire of human beings to lose themselves in a sense of unity and comradeship. It is a measure of the excellence of *Dawn Patrol* that it prompts such reflections. The scenes of air fighting are well done, but they have been done as well, perhaps better, before; there are some good moments of pure cinema, such as the taking off of the patrol in the ghostly light of dawn with a cock crowing in the distance; but it is as a study of tension, heroism and humour among a group of closely observed individuals that the film grips and impresses.

Joueur d'Echecs tells the story of Baron de Kempelen, a mysterious Austrian who, it appears, lived in Russia during the reign of Catherine the Great in a house populated by ingenious automata of his own manufacture. In the hands of Mr. Conrad Veidt, Kempelen is a bizarre character who seems to have stepped out of the silent world of *Dr. Caligari* and *The Student of Prague*. Veidt's performance has all the magnetism and subtlety we expect of him, but the film cannot quite succeed in making us take the Baron's contraptions seriously, and the carefully built-up macabre climax, in which a Russian officer is stabbed to death by an encircling ring of mechanical soldiers accidentally set in motion by his own hand, misses its effect because we look at it with the eye of common sense and observe that it would have been a simple matter for the officer to escape by crawling out of the closing circle on all fours. More pleasure is to be had from those parts of the film which present an unusually realistic picture of the Queen (Françoise Rosay), of her strange relationship with Potemkin, and of the peculiar ways of the Russian court in general. A supporting film called *Reporter Investigates Liberty* employs a technique similar to that of the *March of Time* series, but shows little sense of the importance of its theme, playing for cheap laughs by such devices as running a measuring tape over the unclothed portions of a bathing belle.

The Outsider is an English film about an unqualified medical practitioner with a genius for curing the lame. There are several uncommon features about it: for one thing, it is flippant about Nazis and serious about sex (which is the wrong way round from the Censor's point of view); for another, it presents the hero not as an earnest and obviously right thinking man who happens to be on the wrong side of the fence, but as a bounder with endless self-confidence and insulting manners, and one, furthermore, whose unorthodox methods do not always succeed. The part is acted with much gusto and comic resource by George Sanders, and the film promised well until it wilted into a slow and sentimental conclusion,

the moral of which seemed to be that you can't expect a lame girl to walk again unless she has a lover across the room to walk to.

Out West with the Hardys is the fifth instalment of Hollywood's small-town epic about the typical American family of Judge Hardy. Thanks largely to the dynamic personality of Mickey Rooney, who plays Andy Hardy, these films have become immensely popular; and it is sad to record that this time Rooney over-acts until the thing begins to look like a charade. It is not altogether his fault, for most of the dialogue allotted to him is badly overwritten; but it is a pity, for the Hardy family can be great fun, and Rooney at his best can act the heads of most off the grown-ups in Hollywood and Elstree.

PETER GALWAY

PLAYS AND PICTURES

Javanese Dancers at the Phoenix

Style, in the highest sense of the term, was the distinction of these Javanese dancers: every movement, one felt, was the result of centuries of refinement. Sometimes ignorance of the idiom prevented a complete appreciation. Many of the dances are fragments as it were of an epic poem concerned with duels in a heroic age, and are splendidly expressive of masculine pride. Indeed, the most conspicuously beautiful dances, to our ignorant eyes, were those in which the stylisation of fighting movements was most apparent. In one dance, unaccompanied by music, four pairs of young men revolved in attack and defence with an extraordinary sculptural effect, in another a mimed fight led up to a thrilling realistic representation of a duel. The more static dances were notable for the extreme elegance of the hand-postures. The evening ended with Balinese folk-dances, the performers remaining seated, but using body movements and fans in a remarkable variety of rhythms. The costumes were beautiful and various, castellated turbans, filigree wings, bracelets on the upper arm, and fluttering folds of batik combining to metamorphosise the dancers into glittering insects. Mr. Leigh Ashton introduced each dance with a brief explanation that was a model of tact and lucidity. The dancers, all amateurs, deserve the gratitude not only of the Chinese, for the benefit of whose hospitals they came to England, but of all of us to whom they revealed a dancing tradition of the greatest delicacy and loveliness.

"Girdle Round the Earth," at the Torch

The Torch Theatre deserves to be better known: accessible (three minutes from Hyde Park Corner), comfortable and licensed, it is also (as few London theatres are) properly warmed. Its latest production, a new play by Miss Margaret Love, is well suited to the tiny stage, for it has only three characters. They are the mother, the wife and the fiancée of three airmen who are making a record-breaking flight round the world, and by a plausible device the three women pass the ten days of suspense under o roof. Miss Love possesses a natural sense of the stage, and she has managed to convey in easy and natural dialogue the different reactions of the women to their disagreeable situation. The play gives the impression of having no central attitude towards the problem it raises, because the wife who passionately argues the case against the craze for speed is so much more persuasive than either the young girl who is all for the heroism of the clear blue sky or the mother who is by temperament inclined to resignation; and the last line seems nevertheless to imply that resignation is best. If the play is to be transferred to a larger theatre, Miss Love would do well to make a slight alteration in the last act to remove one of those factual improbabilities which audiences always dislike; apart from this, it is more worth seeing than three-quarters of the plays produced in the West End. Barbara Couper was excellent as the distraught and disillusioned wife, Clare Harris as the mother exuded homely suburban good sense, and Daphne Rye, having begun by making the girl almost too exasperatingly stupid, managed well the difficult transition to hysteria.

"Little Ladyship," at the Strand

A farce masquerading as a comedy of manners is as unhappy as a comedy aspiring to be a Social Document, and Mr. Hay's latest play only fails to be amusing when it abandons the string of sausages for the lorgnette. *Little Ladyship* outdoes *Charley's Aunt* by presenting not an undergraduate pretending to be an elderly lady, but a smart married woman furtively slipping away from her husband to spend stolen hours as a pupil in a strict girls' school. We don't believe in Miss Lili Palmer's adolescence any more than in her desire to pass the Higher Certificate, but her adventures at Tadworthy House School provide a good deal of pleasant entertainment. Mr. Hay is at his best in school, and the class-room scene, which is as funny as anything he has written, goes far to justify the remainder of the play. The cast make an admirable best of their good, bad and indifferent jobs. Miss Palmer is lovable if unlikely as the schoolgirl-wife, while Mr. Cecil Parker makes her doctor husband fascinating enough to explain what will certainly be an unhappy marriage. The best of the acting centred round the school scene, and it is difficult to overpraise the snooty, know-all grubbiness of Miss Joan White, or Mr. David Tree's brilliant little parody of an inhibited young master. Unfortunately, however, one scene doesn't make an evening; *Little Ladyship* should have been produced nearer Christmas.

"Twelfth Night," by Raynes Park County School

This production, though only the third given by Raynes Park County School, shows a good dramatic tradition well on the way to being established. Boy actors lend themselves more readily to tragedy than to comedy; the producer of this *Twelfth Night*, however, by going all out for speed, and with the aid of a fore-stage that enabled scene to follow scene with almost professional slickness, achieved a delicious animation and sparkle. Here he was helped by some really charming sets and costumes, the latter designed by the art-master and carried out by parents. Though all the cast gabbled some of the time (and some of them all the time), and though even the best performers did not bring out a sufficient variation of tempo, this was perhaps an almost inevitable defect—with inexperienced actors—of the play's chief virtue; certainly, we have never heard an amateur cast quicker on their cues.

It is untrue to say that boys are natural actors; they are sometimes natural mimics, which is a very different thing. For this reason one often finds the most convincing performances given by boys who have, in fact, been taught every gesture and intonation. Whether it was through aptitude or training, three characters stood out. S. C. Honeker's Viola had a vivacity and attack that kept all but the stickiest parts of the play moving prettily; E. B. Jephson gave to Orsino both dignity and tenderness; while S. Brookes' Maria had just the right demure bubbling humour, besides a notable grace of gesture. The players of Fabian and Sebastian also struck the eye—one would have liked to see the latter as Olivia. Sir Toby and Sir Andrew were less effective; but they, the Gang, and Malvolio all did excellently in the letter scene.

Henry Moore at the Mayor Gallery

This exhibition of drawings is uncommonly interesting. Several of them show, as if in a film, the stages by which Mr. Moore formalises the human head or body to the point of abstraction—a "disappearing act" sometimes reminiscent of the Cheshire Cat, though the ultimate product is less likely to resemble a smile than an antediluvian bone or a horticultural instrument. There is usually something indefinably sinister about Mr. Moore's larger works—like many African fetishes and Pacific masks, they seem calculated to appal. But his drawings are often elegant, and occasionally comic. The variations he performs upon the theme of the human face suggest considerable satirical gifts, and when our bodies are attenuated to resemble those of insects one suspects, perhaps wrongly, a sardonic intention. Several of the groups seem social caricatures. Sometimes, too, Mr. Moore invents figures that seem to be monstrous progeny of a skeleton and a *bidet*. But his extreme technical accomplishment never deserts him, and his feeling for *matière* and colour is no less noticeable than the excellence of his drawing. Indeed there are some exercises in coloured shapes (15, 18 and 19) which make one wonder whether he is not at least as gifted for painting as for sculpture. In the Red Reclining figures (28), again, the texture achieved is painterly to a remarkable degree. This is an exhibition that everyone interested in contemporary art should try to visit.

Artists International Association, at the Whitechapel Gallery

The Artists International Association's fourth annual exhibition is restricted to works by members only. It is the best general show the Association has organised. It is also one of the best

general shows of contemporary painting that has been seen in London for some time. "Unity of Artists for Peace, Democracy and Cultural Progress," the Association's slogan, sounds hopelessly idealistic; but this show demonstrates that the Association has succeeded in breaking down some at least of the perennial feuds of painters. Augustus John has sent a splendidly vigorous head; the Lucien Pissarro landscape is marvellously delicate, and one of the best things this artist has done. The central feature of the exhibition is a series of transcriptions into paint of Goya's "Disasters of War." One of these, by Duncan Grant, a canvas five feet by four, resplendent with colour, dominates a wall, and gives a scale to everything else. Other good transcriptions are by Rodrigo Moynihan, Carel Weight, Lawrence Gowing, Graham Bell and Victor Pasmore. The absence of a ban on works which have been shown before enables Victor Pasmore and William Coldstream to show their best works up to this date—the "Flower Barrow" and "Inez Spender." There is a John Nash woodland scene and a fine flower piece by Vanessa Bell. Edward Wolfe has a brilliantly coloured Moroccan scene, Geoffrey Tibble and Claude Rogers have portraits. The general standard is high and there are good pictures by Colin McInnes, Maurice Feild, Beryl Sinclair, Sam Carter, Basil Roche, Kenneth Rowntree, Margaret Thomas, Margaret Mellis, Adrian Stokes and a dozen other less-known painters. The abstract section is small but beautifully arranged and includes some excellent Ben Nicholsons of the vintage pre-circle years. Surrealist members (who include Paul Nash, John Banting, Uric Richards, Robert Baxter) have the best wall in the gallery and their dreams and bogies should provide Whitechapel with something to think and talk about in the next few weeks. There is a lot of sculpture. Frank Dobson, Henry Moore, Barbara Hepworth, Gertrude Hermes and L. Peri (who works in coloured concrete) are all represented. The water-colours include work by Edward Bawden and Eric Ravilious, as well as some of S. R. Badmin's infinitely neat and patient work. An effort is being made at the show, to further the A.I.A. "Portraits for Spain" scheme, by which artists have agreed to accept commissions obtained for them by the scheme and to give the fee to the Spanish Relief Fund. This scheme has already raised over £600, but there are still empty canvases by Duncan Grant, William Coldstream, Edward Wolfe, Geoffrey Tibble, Vanessa Bell, waiting to find a buyer.

THE COMING WEEK

SATURDAY, February 18th—
N.C.C.L. Conference on the Civil Rights of Black-Coated Workers, Conway Hall, 2.15. Admission 1s.
Conference on "The Axis of the British Empire," Bedford College, 10.30–1 and 2.30–7. And on Feb. 19th, 2.30–6.
Recital by Lener Quartet, Wigmore Hall, 3. And on Feb. 21st, 8.30.

SUNDAY, February 19th—
M. J. Bonn: "Migration in the Modern World," Conway Hall, 11.
Film Society Show, "La Femme du Boulanger," New Gallery, 2.30.
Wal Hannington: "The Problem of the Distressed Areas," 153 Finchley Road, 6.15.
"The Courageous Sex," Globe.

MONDAY, February 20th—
"St. Joan," English School Theatre Soc., Winter Garden.
"Fascism and Industrial Capitalism," 39 Doughty Street, 8.30

TUESDAY, February 21st—
Rev. T. Cullen Young: "Christianity and the African Mind," Friends House, 1.20.
W. G. Eady: "The Care of the Unemployed," L.S.E., 5.
W. B. Curry: "Physics and Free-will," Conway Hall, 7.
Madeleine Kent: "Germany," Morley College, 8.
"Children Must Laugh," film of work done at Medem Sanatorium; 2 St. John's Wood Studios, Queens Terrace, 8.15.
Ramsay Muir: "It It Peace?" Hampstead Town Hall, 8.30.
"An Enemy of the People," Old Vic.
"To Love and to Cherish," Kingsway.

WEDNESDAY, February 22nd—
Hamilton Fyfe: "Looking Ahead," Herne Hill Congr. Church, 8.
J. D. Bernal: "Science under Socialism," 153 Finchley Road, 8.15.
"Johnson over Jordan," New.

THURSDAY, February 23rd—
B. Thomas: "Migration and Control of Population," L.S.E., 5.
Herbert Read: "Necessity of Anarchism," Livingstone Hall, 8.
"Asmodée," Gate.

FRIDAY, February 24th—
Dance in aid of Spain's Children, Finsbury Town Hall, 7.30.
Philip Jordan: "The Craft of Journalism," Group Theatre Rooms, Gt. Newport St., 8. Admission 6d.

Correspondence

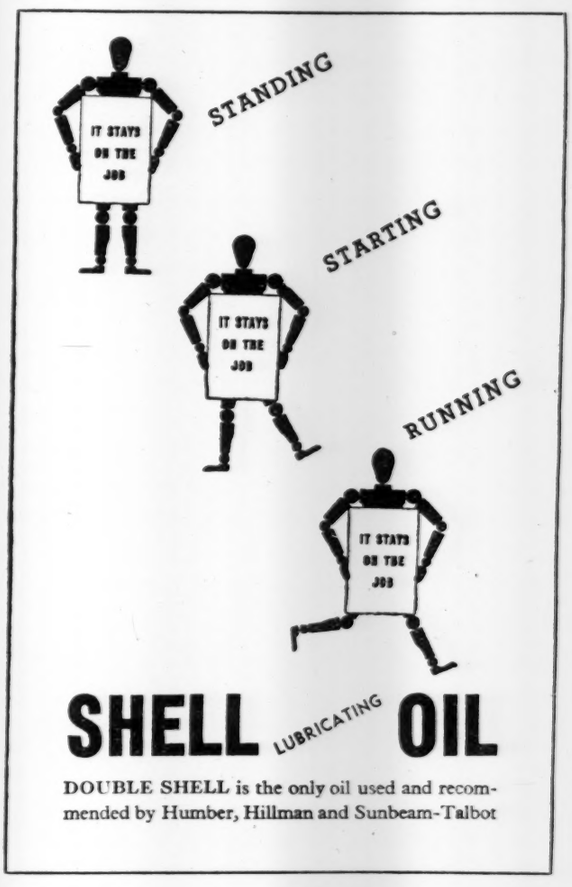
SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS

SIR,—In the controversy between Sir Stafford Cripps and the Labour Party Executive, there is evident danger that two quite distinct issues may become so closely intertwined that neither will be clearly decided, and this may well be disastrous.

I am one of the "Old Guard" of the movement, and I have seen the controversy now raging round the conception of a "Progressive Front" fought out many times in the history of the party. We never had a virile party in the House or in the country till we had weaned the majority of Trade Unionists from attachment to the "Progressive" alliance as a policy; and I do not believe that now there is any substance in the agitation for reversion to what used to be called "Liberal-Labourism." You and Sir Stafford insist upon the fact of a "new situation," but you adduce no new argument.

On that issue, then, I am against Sir Stafford, and deplore the waste of his energies and gifts in the pursuit of a chimera, but his mistakes seem to me insignificant by comparison with the amazing action of the Executive in expelling him from the Party. This indeed is the "Moscow technique" with a vengeance. I can recollect no parallel in English politics apart from the Communist Party and tiny Socialist sects. Nor can I conceive any action more likely to alienate the non-party voter whose support we have to win for our desired majority. English electors at least mistrust parties that cannot afford to tolerate internal criticism and differences about policy. The Tories keep their Churchills and Edens and Amerys out of office, but they keep them in the Party, and find them rather an asset than a liability.

The *Daily Herald*, I observe, asserts that by issuing his memorandum, Sir Stafford has "violated the Constitution of the Party," a mendacious and ridiculous statement that will deceive nobody who knows the Constitution. I hope and believe that most of us who disagree with Sir Stafford on the question of policy will be prepared to maintain his right to try and convert us. It is only by the denial of such rights that any danger of a "split" can arise.


STANDING
IT STAYS ON THE JOB
STARTING
IT STAYS ON THE JOB
RUNNING
IT STAYS ON THE JOB
SHELL LUBRICATING OIL
DOUBLE SHELL is the only oil used and recommended by Humber, Hillman and Sunbeam-Talbot

My fear is that Sir Stafford and his champions may play into the hands of the despotic elements in the Executive by failing to keep the two issues separate in any discussion. I believe that on a straight vote the Party Conference will refuse to approve his expulsion; but it will not accept his policy, and if he allows the vote to be regarded as a test of agreement or disagreement with his attitude, he will lose. Such a result will do no good to him, and infinite harm to the Labour Party. FRED HUGHES

17 The Furrows,
Walton-on-Thames.

SIR,—I am not yet in a position to comment on the possibility of the compromise suggested in the letter you published on February 4th, but I would like to answer one point in Mr. G. R. Strauss's letter. He says the compromise has already been rejected by the National Executive. This is not so. During my negotiations I have been agreeably surprised to find how many members of the Executive were in favour of arrangements with the Liberals such as I have mentioned, provided they could be made tacitly and without formal bargaining; in fact, there is some ground for saying that, if Sir Stafford Cripps had not launched his campaign, the Executive of its own volition might have come to such arrangements.

Mr. Strauss's letter goes on to make clear that what the Executive rejected were "electoral arrangements in the 200 odd constituencies where Labour has no chance at all." But such arrangements would, in fact, be the whole "Popular Front"—or nine-tenths of it. IVOR THOMAS

16A John Street,
Adelphi, W.C.2.

POLICE AND DEMONSTRATORS

SIR,—We have collected a considerable volume of evidence of irregular conduct on the part of the police on the night of January 31st in Parliament Square, Whitehall and Piccadilly Circus. The Home Secretary, however, has thought fit to give a total denial to these allegations. In spite of substantial evidence to the contrary he has twice stated in the House of Commons that at no time on that evening were truncheons drawn or used.

A group of Members of Parliament who have taken this matter up on our behalf are anxious to have all possible evidence at their disposal—particularly in regard to any women who were assaulted by police, any unjustifiable assaults on men by batons or fists, and any instances of the use of grossly offensive language by police.

I shall be glad if eye-witnesses will send their statements to me immediately, setting out clearly but briefly the facts of all well-authenticated instances of this kind. I should also like to get into touch at once with any people who saw a tall young woman with a fair Eton-crop assaulted by police officers on two occasions between 9.10 and 9.45 p.m.—first at the Car Park outside the public entrance of the Houses of Parliament in Old Palace Yard, and secondly on the pavement of the west side of Abingdon Street.

The National Council for Civil Liberties, RONALD KIDD, Secretary
320 Regent Street, London, W.1.

STAG HUNTING

SIR,—On January 28th last a hind and a calf chased by the Devon and Somerset Staghounds sought safety by taking to the sea in rough water at Minehead. The hounds and hunt remained on the beach. The hind more than once came ashore, but each time, scared back, she took to the sea again. One of the Hunt Secretaries fetched a gun, but was unable to shoot the hind, which eventually, after two hours in the sea, landed farther down the coast and escaped. This unedifying spectacle was watched by a disgusted crowd. The corpse of the drowned calf was washed ashore later.

The bare recital of these facts should suffice to gain the support of every humane-minded voter for the Bill to prohibit stag hunting (Protection of Animals, No. 2) to be introduced in Parliament during this session. The further knowledge that similar "hunting incidents" are by no means infrequent, plus the reflection that civilised people are deriving their pleasure from thus harrying sentient creatures, must, we imagine, ensure it.

Public feeling against Exmoor stag hunting—a barbarous survival with an inevitable train of cruelty and suffering—has grown with marked rapidity during the last few years. Is it not time that all who still care for wild nature should unite against this desecration of one of the fairest stretches of the English countryside?

BERTRAM LLOYD,
Hon. Secretary
The National Society for the Abolition of Cruel Sports,
56 Bloomsbury Street, London, W.C.1.

FOOD FOR SPAIN

SIR,—In their gallantry the Republicans of Madrid and Central Spain have determined to resist. Our part, so long as they are fighting, must be to act as their commissariat.

The Labour Spain Committee, whose first appeal you were good enough to publish, has collected from parties and individuals £3,900 since the beginning of November. We have sent out food to this value without delay, milk, codfish, ship's biscuits, potatoes and cod-liver oil. All of it has duly arrived. We have information which satisfies us that food ships are still reaching the ports of Central Spain safely.

Donations should be sent to our Treasurer, Mr. Austen Albu, at 20 East Heath Road N.W.3. We are able to assure subscribers that all our work is done by volunteers and that we have no overhead expenses. H. N. BRAILSFORD, Chairman.
Labour Spain Committee. J. POLE, Secretary.

CHRISTIAN SOCIALIST HYMNS

SIR,—Many Church people and others have felt the need of a collection of Christian Socialist or Progressive hymns.

There is a small committee of clergymen in Bristol who are prepared to undertake the task of making such a collection.

May we appeal to your readers to submit any such hymns they may have written, and to grant us the limited use of any suitable ones? The effort is not profit-making, but should any result, the money would be given to any deserving cause, at the discretion, not of the committee, but of the hymn-writers.

St. Michael's Rectory, F. C. VYVYAN JONES
1 Cotham Park Mansions,
Redland, Bristol, 6.

GLUCK

SIR,—The praise of the Toynbee Hall Theatre Club contained in Mr. W. J. Turner's most excellent article on the performance of Gluck's *Orpheus* is particularly gratifying, because there are some of us who have felt doubts as to whether justice can be done to this marvellous composer in any opera house whatever. In listening to the performance of some of Mozart's operas at Glyndebourne one cannot help feeling that the qualities of the singers, though admirably adapted to works of a lesser order than Mozart's, fail to do justice to the highest type of music. I doubt whether the more critical among us would be satisfied by a performance of Gluck's works at Glyndebourne. Music such as this, which utterly extinguishes that of Wagner and Richard Strauss by the brilliancy and subtle delicacy of its colouring, demands the best voices and the best trained choirs in the land. The whole attention of the singer and the listener must be concentrated upon the music. After all, is it not the oratorio singer, and not the operatic, who can really do justice to Gluck? One goes to the extreme of wishing merely to hear, and not to see, such works as *Orpheus*, *Alceste* and *Iphigenia*. Somehow one feels that, could they be performed at the Queen's Hall or the Albert Hall, we should at last begin to realise that the genius of Gluck is unsurpassed. A. C. GISSING

We are glad to acknowledge the following further sums received for Spanish Relief: Anon. (£250); Dorothy Carter (£10); Adrian Stokes (£6); J. Boyle (£5); Anon., J. H. Bell (£3); M. E. P. (£2 10s.); H. B. H., J. Hoyle, E. M. Pearson (£2); H. D. M. (£1 10s.); John and Dorothy Edwards (£1 5s.); Anon., J. H. C., J. D. Cohen, N. M. Gantz, John Mayson, R. I. C. O'L., C. C. R. and B. W. O., R. J. R., "Wednesday" (£1); A Few G.I.O. Members, C. and K. (12s. 6d.); Social Committee of the Headington Labour Party (12s.); A Studio, F. G. B., P. T. B., C. F. Cumbers, "Frederica," E. Hall, M. I. M. I., Mrs. Frank Keen, F. C. S., A. K. S., M. Snow, D. C. Williams (10s.); In Memory of Miss Wyeld (7s. 6d.); J. J. (6s. 6d.); Anon., S. D., M. D. M., F. W. (5s.); O. W. Sinclair (4s.); 2CM (3s.); Anon., O. J. E., W. J. Price (2s. 6d.); F. H. Chase ($5).

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

THE worth of evidence depends upon the man who gives it, and Mr. John D. Littlepage would prepossess any Anglo-Saxon court in his favour. He is an American mining engineer from Alaska, six foot three in height, as strong as a bear and physically remarkably tough. He is possessed of that particularly happy blend of patience and gentleness which in men, cart-horses and dogs so often accompanies great physical strength, and he has man's gifts of humour and intelligence as well. Two of his other characteristics are most important. He is entirely without the Irishman's knack of getting himself mixed up in a quarrel. This is because he lacks that quick and noble response of indignation at the spectacle of cruelty and injustice which makes men instantly take sides. The explanation, I suppose, of the absence of indignation (an aristocratic quality) is that people learn not to feel it when it is too dangerous, and that in Western America, where everyone carried revolvers, the tradition of staying out of a fight rapidly grew up. Mr. Littlepage's desire not to be mixed up in a quarrel is accompanied by an absence of desire to find out the rights and wrongs of one, which is only a special instance of his indifference to theory. Such appears to be the man who from 1927-1937 was the principal foreign engineer employed by the Gold Trust in U.S.S.R., who has now been helped to tell the story of his experiences in a book, *In Search of Soviet Gold* (Harrap, 8*s.* 6*d.*), by his friend Mr. Demaree Bess, who during the same period was the Moscow correspondent of *The Christian Science Monitor*. There have been hundreds of witnesses of what has been taking place in Russia. Mr. Littlepage's chief value is due to his knowledge of Siberian conditions, his absence of interest in theory, and that he has not been infected by the Communist jargon. Mr. Bess says in a foreword:

> The Soviet Communists enveloped everybody in their own atmosphere of pseudo-scientific terms, a newly invented language. . . . which, like the pig-Latin children invent for their own amusement, has proved very contagious, and has spread all over the world. . . . What drew me to Littlepage from my first conversation with him was his immunity from this artificial speech.

* * *

The first and last impression left by this book is its author's enthusiasm for Siberia. Its size (as big as the U.S.A. and Europe without Russia), its emptiness and the vast natural resources in rich uncultivated land, forests, and minerals, set his pioneering spirit on fire; the whole book glows with his excitement at discovering Siberia for himself. The English reader will do well to remember that Mr. Littlepage contrasts this promised land not with Devonshire or the South of France, but with his native Alaska. Then he is a gold miner, and he found that Siberia was full of gold. When Mr. Littlepage went out in 1927 to Kochkar in the Southern Urals he found life rich, easy and abundant. Food was cheap and plentiful, and the great nomadic tribes of Bashkirs and Kirghiz had almost recovered from the destruction of their herds and flocks during the years of war and revolution. These nomadic peoples greatly interested Mr. Littlepage, and he took every opportunity of visiting them. But in 1929 what Mr. Littlepage calls "the second Communist revolution" started.

> It just looked to me as if most of the small farmers in Russia were being moved from one place to another under police guard. I had no more idea of why this was being done than most of the Russians seemed to have. It appeared that orders had come from Moscow. . . . They didn't like the idea of small farmers cultivating their little plots . . . just as they didn't like the idea of the nomad herders roaming about on the steppes with their flocks of sheep and cattle and milk-mares. . . . Of course, it was pretty hard on the people of Russia at the time. It was rough on the kulaks themselves. . . . And it was also tough on the rest of Russia's population who went short of food for years. . . . I don't know whether it was any benefit to our mines or not. True, we got some much needed labour. . . . But, on the other hand, we had to put up for years with a food shortage which kept all our workers in poor shape for getting full production.

* * *

The effect on the nomad tribes was even more shattering. They were ordered not to move about but to live in permanent dwellings, and to pool their herds in collective farms. They killed their animals in thousands before submitting: then they were rounded up and sent to work in the mines. Few of them could speak Russian, or could adapt themselves to the change from a diet of meat and milk to one of black bread. They had never seen machinery.

> It can be imagined what a heart-breaking job it was to teach such workmen to use air-drills . . . and especially to handle dynamite. . . . It was a haywire business trying to operate large mines with such labour.

Mr. Littlepage brings out the other side of the picture—as shown in the film *Son of Mongolia* at the Forum. The Communists were most anxious to favour the natives. They insisted that natives should be given half the responsible positions in the mines and other enterprises, and the courts were so pro-native that Russians were not willing to invoke their help in any dispute. It was only when Mr. Littlepage drove for weeks across the flat steppes of Kazakstan, which had once been covered with herds and tents, that he saw the destruction caused by the struggle between nomads and Communists.

> There was pasturage here for millions of milk-mares and camels and sheep, and it was now going to waste. The herds had disappeared and the nomads with them. As we bumped along we caught frequent glimpses of smoke rising lazily from the ruins of adobe villages once occupied in winter by herders.

Another class to be liquidated, though only temporarily, were the old-time gold prospectors, "a group which I suspected could not easily be spared."

* * *

When Mr. Littlepage arrived in the U.S.S.R. he found that managing engineers were expected to wear gloves and keep apart from the workmen. He realised he would get nowhere unless he trained men to use the tools by demonstrating them, and made all mining students work as miners as part of their training. The Russian Communists soon caught on to the ideas of American democracy, and relations in the Gold Trust went well, while production leaped up until now Siberia is second only to South Africa in gold output. The part of Mr. Littlepage's book which will arouse the greatest interest is his experience of sabotage and wrecking, and of the trials of leading Communists on charges of wrecking. Sabotage has always been extremely common in Russia, as a large number of the men who are made to work machines hate them, wish to smash them and go back to their old way of life. Thus Mr. Littlepage, dropping his hand casually on the bearing of a Diesel engine, felt grit in the oil. When the sump was drained he found several handfuls of fine quartz had been added to the oil. This on the part of workmen was natural and reasonable. The extraordinary thing is that Mr. Littlepage firmly believes that highly placed Communists were in a conspiracy to wreck industry. Thus the result of a highly placed investigating commission to the Kalata mines, which had been efficiently run, was to produce chaos. The pillars left as supports were drilled so that the mine collapsed, and the ventilating system installed where there were no harmful gases or dust of any kind. The confessions at a subsequent trial stated that the members of the commission were conspirators travelling from mine to mine lining up supporters. Mr. Littlepage was one of those sent with Piatakov to buy machinery in Berlin, and soon became aware that something extremely peculiar was afoot. It was either graft or a political plot of the kind outlined by Piatakov at his trial. Mr. Littlepage had found it hard to believe it was graft, as the leading Communists "were not the kind to be interested in feathering their own nests." He therefore accepts the evidence of the wrecking trials, and believes in a nation-wide conspiracy. What he doesn't explain is why the conspirators adopted indirect methods so likely to be brought to light, when a brief *battue* in the Kremlin, on the German model of June 30th, would have proved so far more effective.

DAVID GARNETT

NEW NOVELS

Three Men Make a World. By ANDREW MARVELL. *Gollancz.* 7s. 6d.

Hawk Among the Sparrows. By DESMOND HAWKINS. *Longmans.* 7s. 6d.

Hope of Heaven. By JOHN O'HARA. *Faber and Faber.* 7s. 6d.

The Long Valley. By JOHN STEINBECK. *Heinemann.* 7s. 6d.

Steel Saraband. By ROGER DATALLER. *Nelson.* 8s. 6d.

Three Men Make a World is an old-style thriller. There are shots in the dark, hooks to the jaw, an evil, inscrutable Boss with pig's eyes and a will of brass, and even our old friend the Baccillus that can destroy the world. But if new Marvell is old Sapper, it is old Sapper writ backwards, with Peterson in angel's clothing, tricking and smiting the dim, anonymous Drummonds of law and the old order until the world is, more or less, successfully destroyed. Mr. Marvell's central idea is highly ingenious. A biologist produces, quite by chance, a freak germ-culture capable of reducing oil to a watery jelly, and the Oil interests, with the implicit backing of their governments, determine to suppress the discovery before it can take effect. By a series of those remarkable coincidences that occur in fact but should be avoided in fiction a tube of the culture falls into the hands of three introspective Just Men, is accidentally released at the beginning of a great war and leaves a happy, simple England whose few surviving inhabitants tend their cows in mutual equity and give free meals to ragged ex-capitalists, unemployed for the first time in history. Between the shots at King's Cross that open the story and the bleating of sheep that ends it are a little third-rate sentiment and rather more second-rate philosophy, together with a great deal of first-class action that compensates for both.

Mr. Marvell's characters are a commonplace lot—we've all met, in fiction at any rate, the modest, cowardly writer of detective-novels, the ascetic biologist and the simple, ruthless, adventurous giant with hands alternately as tender as a woman's and as violent as a steam hammer. These three are inoffensive enough, but unhappily there is also Silya, a Natural Woman who hugs, mates and mothers with the enthusiasm and indiscrimination of parched earth receiving rain, and continually makes such adorable remarks as, "Too mooch I eat! Already is the figure gone. No matter, I am hoppy. Mother eat a lot, too. She is fat, like that!" But *Three Men Make a World* is primarily a novel of incident and event. Mr. Marvell has discovered the obvious secret—apparently, however, unknown to many adventure-story writers—that excitement lies mainly in contrast with familiarity, and that a dagger in Charlotte Street is more exciting than machine guns in Karlotta Platz or a roaring dragon seen on the Sierra San Carlos. By monthly magazine standards his thrills are small beer; there are three murders (two of them off stage), a street brawl, an interview with the enemy in Westminster Abbey and an air-raid, but no kidnappings, poisons, tortures or gallant exploits. Yet, because the setting is familiar and because he has the confidence to avoid wild-western heroics and describe action in all its clumsy reality, Mr. Marvell is never less readable than a newspaper and sometimes as vivid as a personal experience; while though his heroes are tiresome and unnatural, the minor figures—so minor they have no time to be more than caricature—are as odd and as convincing as the extras in *Sous Les Toits de Paris*. The tone of the book is that it all might have happened to anyone, and for most of the time we almost believe it.

Mr. Hawkins endears himself to us by his punning title and charms with his felicitous style, but there's no denying that *Hawk Among the Sparrows* is very quiet stuff. The Hawk, flatteringly enough, is the Intellectual (most of whom really feel like sheep among wolves), and the story tells how Mr. Kipter, a bearded, slightly moulting specimen of his noble and predatory kind, comes to lodge with a family of formidable lower-middle-class sparrows and nearly loses his tail feathers. Accepting the dubious first premise: that sparrows admire rather than laugh at hawks, the eventual outcome is obvious enough. Kipter strokes his beard in the third floor back, his landlady pats her flaxen hair and prepares to emulate Mrs. Potiphar, and her gawkish niece begins to feel the flowering of love; until the nest is tangled in such a knot of emotional tensions that the hawk has to take flight through a back window. So slender a story requires considerable padding, and Mr. Hawkins has provided the necessary in pages of psychological analysis. It is by now a platitude that there is no such thing as a casual remark, and everyone knows that the lightest sentence is the fruit of tremendous unconscious conflict. In his anxiety to make the obvious entertaining Mr. Hawkins describes the feelings of his characters with the careful rhetoric of a military historian assessing the flux of a battle, and gives us extensive passages of passionless *ersatz*-Lawrence:

> His mind kept feeling round the details of that night, like a cat's tongue in a tin. He remembered . . . the insidious looping of Mrs. Sparge's voice, cool and deft as a lariat, roping the coincidence of a bus ride. All the suspicions and jealousies of his married life intersected at that point. He had known that dark side of her, barred against him, the hidden profile that belied her smiles to him. She was a maze of secret exits, a warren of escapes which he could never block. When she spoke to him two more silent words fled down the wind. She had always been a house with a locked room, comfortable for no man, etc., etc.

What a pity reviewers can't write like that. *Hawk Among the Sparrows* is too well written to be dismissed out of hand, and if the author has nothing much to say, he at least refrains from the psycho-sexual nonsense that his school of writing tends to promote. The real, perhaps the only, trouble about his book is that it overworks its material, and makes what might have been an admirable short story into a long-winded, second-class novel.

Here we are again, and what is one to say about it? *Hope of Heaven* is a collection of thirty-seven short stories dealing, mainly, with straight sex, straight rye, and crooked, unhappy tough guys (all the guys are tough, of course, but the toughest and unhappiest ones have stories to themselves). Mr. O'Hara is slick, vital, vivid, realistic, brutal, humorous, honest, tireless, readable, fearless and generally swell, and writes in the Hemingway idiom as competently as a literary competitor imitates Pope. The only virtue he lacks is originality, and that, significantly enough, is the primary quality the blurb assigns him, calling him, rather oddly, "the most contemporary writer of the new world" and boasting of his ignorance of the Classics. Mr. O'Hara belongs to that able group of American writers who, to pun badly, can't get out of the post-war rut, and adopts a literary mode that has already reached its perfection. When the world unites to produce its autobiographical novel, with each aspect of life allotted to a suitable novelist, I shall star Mr. O'Hara for the pub crawl and the amorous wisecrack. But until then, what *is* one to say about him?

The Long Valley is a collection of short stories, most of which have already been published, though some only in limited editions. The themes are very simple: the death of a fugitive in the hills; a man walking home after taking part in a lynching; a small boy's love for his pony (the best of all, this); but the stories are far more than those "authentic glimpses" of experience that offer a facsimile rather than attempt understanding. Without affectation of style or any of the numerous narrative tricks that mark such a book as *Hope of Heaven*, Mr. Steinbeck possesses that directness of feeling and expression that is coming to be regarded as distinctively American, yet he never falls into the complementary error of making his characters—even the oddest—stock figures from a feature reporter's notebook. Mr. Steinbeck is not a great writer—he has too little passion for that, and his mind seems too observant to be really creative—but in his own way he is as perfect a craftsman as Hemingway and his disciples. But whereas Mr. O'Hara has mastered merely a peculiar idiom, Mr. Steinbeck has learnt the trick of the short story and given each of his tales the polish and poise of a sonnet.

Steel Saraband is a genuinely proletarian novel in that the author has worked in the steel factory he describes, and became a writer and broadcaster purely on his own talents. Unfortunately, since to-day the novel of emotions, like poetry in the eighteenth century, is the conventional form of literary self-expression, whether or not it suits one's particular abilities, Mr. Dataller has felt himself compelled to describe not only the heat and thunder of the mills, but also the cooler and more familiar relations between an ambitious man and his wife. When we are at the Works, whether watching the technical processes of production, the intrigues for promotion or the difficult relations between Union and Management, this is a vigorous and unusual novel, standing out from the rabble of competitors by really knowing its subject. But when work's over and he goes home to his wife and her platonic *affaire* with an amateur poet, Mr. Dataller puts himself on a level with his multitudinous rivals and does not stand out particularly well by comparison. *Steel Saraband* is a doughnut, with fact in the middle and feeling providing the stodgy outside. I hope its successor will be all jam.

JOHN MAIR

MACMILLAN

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NEL

Richard

MACMILLAN

FALLEN BASTIONS

Fallen Bastions. By G. E. R. GEDYE. *Gollancz.* 16*s.*

Our capacity for sympathy is limited by our experience. The ordinary Englishman can grow indignant at English crimes and English injustice, but when it comes to organised oppression abroad he either distorts it into English terms or just does not feel it at all. That is why the books of foreign correspondents like Douglas Reade and G. E. R. Gedye are so tremendously important. They are written by Englishmen like ourselves—but Englishmen who have lived through the horrors of modern Europe. Reading *Insanity Fair* or *Fallen Bastions*, we suddenly realise with acute physical nausea that these things are not merely newspaper stories but the sufferings of human beings. We feel it because Englishmen have felt it and had the skill to enable us to feel it too.

Mr. Gedye avoids the besetting sin of many first-class journalists; he is not hard-boiled. As in the days of the Revolver Republic, though he is never sentimental, he feels acutely and he hates beastliness whether it is committed by allies or enemies. He is politically biased but emotionally sound. This combination of qualities has made him a great journalist.

It is little wonder, therefore, that in recent years his despatches from Central Europe to the English, and still more to the American papers have been so eagerly read by people who wanted to get at the truth and its human meaning. In his new book his character comes out far more richly than it ever could in urgent overnight messages. A quick appreciation of every kind of passionate action or suffering, a doggedness in debunking the slippery and the smoke-screen raisers to their faces, unlimited courage and an almost schoolboy zest, make a first-class equipment for a journalist, but to these Mr. Gedye adds an indignation that rises at times to white heat. Indignation, indeed, is the keynote of the book. In the first two chapters, he recapitulates some of the events which he had already described in *Heirs to the Hapsburgs*. The difference in the mood of the two accounts is a measure of what a front-seat view of Fascism in action down the Danube could do to a man with strong democratic instincts and a natural enjoyment of life.

It is a remarkable fact that, though four years—to a day—elapsed between the outbreak of civil war in Austria in 1934 and Schuschnigg's fatal visit to Berchtesgaden, there has hitherto been no adequate history in English of the fighting and the extraordinary twilight political situation which followed it. The war on two fronts which the Austrian government had to wage with the majority of the population against it, the ceaseless underground activities of the various political parties, the sudden explosions of violence, the tangled web of intrigues involving most of the European Powers, were a gift to a writer with a sense of the dramatic and the picturesque, who could see that the little country had turned into a nucleus of the European unrest. One reason among many why this story never got written before the collapse, and why therefore the situation in Vienna was so little understood in an England where Austrian peasant dress had rapidly become all the rage, was that those who could tell most were unable to speak out. Mr. Gedye was one of the Anglo-American journalists who stayed to see the game played through, and his immense experience and wealth of material had to wait till the curtain had been rung down to be made available to the public. In a way, it is rather a pity that he found himself plunged at once into the middle of another drama, and that the urgency of the world situation decided him to compress the Austrian and Czech tragedies into one book, which here and there shows signs of hurried editing. There must still be Austrian material enough for many fascinating chapters in his memory, even if the Nazis' arrival forced him to burn his archives; and it is difficult not to believe that if he had the space and time he could have made his breathless and horrifying description of the last months of Czechoslovakia even more valuable by giving it a solid background of the Republic's evolution during the preceding decade, as he himself witnessed it.

As it is, he has given us so much that it may seem ungrateful to grumble at all. He shows only too clearly how the destruction of the Social-Democratic power of Vienna in 1934 was in reality the last stage in a swing-back of the pendulum towards reaction that had been going on ever since the creation of the Republic, a long campaign against the Left whose arch-strategists were Jesuit-trained politicians and politician-priests. It is Mr. Gedye's special merit, that while he makes you feel how contemptible and shoddy the methods employed by the Right were, he brings out the human qualities of Dollfuss and the pathos of his end, and while condemning Schuschnigg as a dictator no whit less oppressive to the working classes during most of his reign of power, acknowledges and admires his personal courage in crisis after crisis, and finds a true nobility, when a desperate last moment attempt to reverse the wheels was made, in his bearing in the face of a situation that had become all but hopeless for himself and his country. He brings heavy charges to bear against the policy of the Social-Democratic leaders, but at the same time sees how large a part scruples of humanity played in their weakness, and how difficult their position was with the destiny of Austria so closely controlled by foreign Powers. It is these foreign Powers, particularly France and England, that receive no quarter in his pages, and if one feels a sense of shame when made to realise so nakedly how we betrayed Austria, this feeling can only grow to utter humiliation and disgust when his spotlight turns to Czechoslovakia, 1938.

Mr. Gedye excels in the dramatic reporting of historic scenes, such as the February fighting in Vienna, the last hours before the Reichswehr crossed the Austro-Bavarian border, and the crowds gathering in Prague as danger reached; given each of his tales the polish and poise of a sonnet.

Steel Saraband is a genuinely proletarian novel in that the author has worked in the steel factory he describes, and became a writer and broadcaster purely on his own talents. Unfortunately, since to-day the novel of emotions, like poetry in the eighteenth century, is the conventional form of literary self-expression, whether or not it suits one's particular abilities, Mr. Dataller has felt himself compelled to describe not only the heat and thunder of the mills, but also the cooler and more familiar relations between an ambitious man and his wife. When we are at the Works, whether watching the technical processes of production, the intrigues for promotion or the difficult relations between Union and Management, this is a vigorous and unusual novel, standing out from the rabble of competitors by really knowing its subject. But when work's over and he goes home to his wife and her platonic *affaire* with an amateur poet, Mr. Dataller puts himself on a level with his multitudinous rivals and does not stand out particularly well by comparison. *Steel Saraband* is a doughnut, with fact in the middle and feeling providing the stodgy outside. I hope its successor will be all jam.

JOHN MAIR

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"POOR CHRIS SMART"

Rejoice in the Lamb: A Song from Bedlam. By CHRISTOPHER SMART. Edited with an Introduction by W. FORCE STEAD. *Cape.* 15*s.*

Christopher Smart had the originality to go mad in an Age of Reason. Madness released a vital spark and he wrote his *Song to David* (1763), without which he would not be remembered to-day. It is a curious poem, isolated perhaps rather than great, and almost as detached from its author as from the century in which it was written. For no one, apparently, could have been less fitted than "poor Chris Smart" to produce the poem that has made him famous. He started to scribble verses at the age of four; thirty years later, before his mind gave, he still showed no more than a thin, miscellaneous talent. At whatever point in his career we pick him out, sane or mad, as drunken don, Grub Street hack or inhabitant of a Bedlam, he is an unemphatic figure, one of those personalities tied together with string who seem certain sooner or later to fall apart. He published two poems on the attributes of the deity; and prefaced them with a puff of Dr. James' fever powder. Converted to the belief that man's life is continual prayer, he embarrassed his friends by falling on his knees in the streets; he wrote kneeling; prayed, drank, and prayed again, and it is doubtful if his weaknesses had much mention in his prayers. Despite his follies, he was liked, and as his eccentricities developed, the "poor" before his Christian name dropped in automatically. He had, as his latest editor, Mr. Stead, points out, a disarming innocence; no doubt, too, he was excessively amiable to everyone, including himself. What—after reading the somewhat meagre accounts of his life—should we name as the quality which he conspicuously lacked? Resolution. Yet *A Song to David*, five hundred lines of sustained lyricism, is one of the most resolute poems in the English language:

> Strong is the lion—like a coal
> His eyeball—like a bastion's mole
> His chest against the foes:
> Strong the gier-eagle on his sail,
> Strong against tide, th' enormous whale
> Emerges, as he goes.
>
> But stronger still, in earth and air,
> And in the sea, the man of pray'r. . . .

This vision is weakened only when we think of "the man of pray'r" as Smart himself.

The verdicts on *A Song to David* are interesting. Contemporary critics seem to have been divided between those (a few) who thought the poem as mad as its author and the majority who praised it while deploring an excessive regularity in its structure. I have not been able to discover any contemporary critic who regarded the poem as anything other than a poetic exercise, better than other things of the kind Smart had done before. The Victorians made up for this lack of understanding. Rossetti raised Smart to a pinnacle above Blake. Browning, with a more exact sense, neglected magnitude for historical appropriateness and placed him between Milton and Keats. That comparison is illuminating, particularly in its second half; for the sensuousness, the appeal to beauty, as well as a queer impassioned dignity, must strike even the modern reader. But is it a great poem? Not quite, I think; when I am reading it, altogether different comparisons spring to my mind. The Victorians, who discovered Smart, produced also the poet with whom he might be paired—James Thomson, his opposite in thought. Each lives by a single poem. They are rootless, they lead nowhere, they build a rhetoric of stone. Their stanzas unroll a scheme, emphasised by categories and moral alliterations. A certain clumsiness and fixity goes with originality, so that we remember their work as a whole without being able to quote a line of it; they leave no tide-mark in the memory. Possibly it is only accident that both poets, the one ecstatic and the other sombre, inhabited the muffled world of the drunkard. Add a third, Poe. "The viol, the violet and the vine" has obvious affiliations with "Determin'd, dar'd and done." There is a recurrent verbal bluntness in the verse of these otherwise sensitive writers: all three—Smart, Thomson, Poe—are full of it. They can be original and at the same time a trifle dull. Because of their personal isolation they are unlike other poets, but they suffer also from lack of contact. We do not feel that any of them is a master. Poe has been superseded by Baudelaire, and so to-day is almost unreadable. Smart and Thomson retain their uniqueness; and being almost great, they are neglected for more accomplished subordinates.

The discovery of *Rejoice in the Lamb* should send up interest in Smart several points. It is a crazy magnificat, written during his confinement and exploring madly the sensibility which afterwards emerged in *A Song to David;* natural history, Biblical personages, names of friends and patrons, travel reading, memories of childhood, glimpses of the lunatic's routine, are poured out in an uninhibited hymn of praise. It forms a bridge between *A Song to David* and the rather sketchy personality of its author; and it shows, in action as it were, the madness which made him as a poet. The scheme of the verses is rigid, half reproducing the formula:

> Let Eleazar rejoice with the Grampus, who is a pompous spouter,

(an amusing example—some are merely odd); others beginning with "For" and introducing random pronouncements or prophecies. In the "For" sections there are many inconsequent and oddly attractive passages:

> For I have adventured in the name of the Lord, and he hath marked me for his own.
>
> For I bless God for the Postmaster-General and all conveyancers of letters under his care, especially Allen and Shelvock.
>
> For my grounds in New Canaan shall infinitely compensate from far the flats and maynes of Steindrop Moor.
>
> For the praise of God can give to a mute fish the notes of a nightingale.
>
> For I have seen the White Ram and Thomas Hall of Willingham and am myself a greater curiosity than both.

At times he hits a baffling beauty, as here:

> For in my nature I quested for beauty, but God, God has sent me to sea for pearls.

Or an image of real splendour:

> For the Glory of God is in the East, but cannot be seen for the cloud of the Crucifixion.

The longest consecutive passage describes charmingly his cat Jeoffroy, with whom he shared his cell as he wrote. It is curious how a homely saying about new bread being best, or gnomic wisdom such as might be found in Blake's *Proverbs of Heaven and Hell*, is embedded in verses of learned and resounding nonsense. As a document of madness *Rejoice in the Lamb* will no doubt be claimed by the surrealists; they will find a passage on rhyming in terms of musical instruments to put beside Rimbaud's sonnet on the vowels. For the light it throws on Smart, it is invaluable; mad though many of the verses are, one sees that Smart for the first time was stretching his mind and using a language of his own. Here and there, indeed, he does better than anywhere in the *Song to David*, where he returns to the technical habits of earlier days. Mr. Force Stead's editing of this manuscript, which he also discovered, his introduction and profuse annotation are all admirable. It is to be hoped that he will one day give us a Life of Smart; at present there is nothing fuller than the article in the D. N. B.

G. W. STONIER

GLORY DEAD?

Glory Dead. By ARTHUR CALDER-MARSHALL. *Michael Joseph.* 15*s.*

Our neglected colonies get very little literary attention. The real journalist seldom has time to spare for such backwaters. It is therefore all to the good that Trinidad should have attracted a man like Mr. Calder-Marshall who knows how to write, and has besides a knowledge of world affairs. His sketches of scenes and types, and his essays into politics, vary in significance, but he approaches the people without superiority or naive romanticism, with friendly understanding born of knowledge of working-class movements elsewhere.

There is no doubt about his eye for scenes and colour. The first part of the book, "a sort of scenario" illustrating life in Port of Spain, is very well done and excellent reading. But though calculated to tempt the reader on it is perhaps not the best of introductions to the rest. The bars and brothels of one tropical seaport are really very like those of any other. Mr. Calder-Marshall's wholly fresh impressions are of the radical "intelligentsia," of the executives of Trade Unions and cultural societies. The Trade Union movement he describes expresses an entirely new determination to organise and co-operate to achieve better living conditions; but after the rather lurid opening one is almost astonished to hear of such disinterested, enthusiastic and well-informed leaders, and it is hard to imagine how the new spirit among the workers could have sprung from such unpromising soil.

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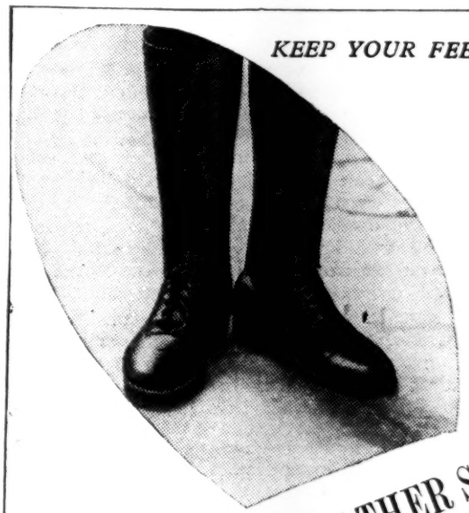

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The great merit of the book is that its vivid presentation leaves the British public with no vestige of excuse for failing to know of the depressing conditions which prevail in what is by no means among the poorest or least fortunate of British dependencies. This is not to say that its lively journalism has said the last word. The bias is throughout too strongly urban. Though agriculture is admittedly still far the greatest of Trinidad activities, Mr. Calder-Marshall follows the example set by the "disturbances" Commission of 1937 in treating the problem as if it were wholly an urban industrial dispute. Landlessness and land-hunger are hardly so much as suggested. There is an excellent piece of reporting on health and housing and the horrors of poverty. But this sordid poverty is not, unfortunately, disposed of, nor even wholly explained, by frequent use of the overworked term "exploitation."

Greater familiarity with the conditions of life in these backward colonies would have induced a little more charity in the judgment here passed on Crown Colony Government. Lack of such a background also makes the author give rather much weight to colour-snobbery, which as he himself shows is being modified by the new influences and the new influx of energy. The strong, able, and not ill-educated black and coloured bourgeoisie are left out of the picture as of little importance, together with the planter aristocracy, though both are an essential part of the West Indian whole. The calculating exclusiveness of Government officials is justly exposed—certainly also the nervous suspicion manifested in the official or police handling of the strike situation, and even of Mr. Calder-Marshall himself. But the picture is too uniformly dark. That the new spirit has taken such firm root is due in part perhaps to the wider opportunity brought by the "exploiting" oil companies, certainly to a latent belief in the right to freedom, which may be laid to the credit of former missionary and philanthropic teaching—based when all is said and done on British tradition, if not British practice. The very weakness of the people makes it even more than usually difficult for the Government—above all the changing personnel of a Crown Colony—to deal as might be wished with dominant, long-established, interests—such as are not powerless nearer home. As a warning against any "deal" with Germany at colonial expense it is time note was taken of the already shattering effect on British prestige of our treatment of Abyssinia. It will be gain if this exposure helps, as it should, to stimulate British colonial rule to more positive action, and so to save the tradition of British justice from the epitaph "Glory Dead."

W. M. MACMILLAN

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(*2nd Printing Ordered.* 8/6 *net.*)

Penny World

HUMPHREY CHESTERMAN'S novel, which was the First Recommendation of *Times Lit. Sup.* last week in an exceptionally long review: "Mr. Chesterman is to be congratulated on the fulfilment of the promise of his first novel *Bolden.* In quite a different vein, this second work has the same distinction and sureness of touch." TANGYE LEAN (*News Chronicle*): "I recommend his study of a man who fell unsuccessfully in love as one of the finest on the subject since Proust exhausted it." (7/6 *net.*)

HARRAP NOVELS

CHATHAM

William Pitt, Earl of Chatham. By BRIAN TUNSTALL. *Hodder and Stoughton.* 20s.

The first Earl of Chatham has been lucky in his biographers, if only because there have been so few of them. It is curious that he has escaped the jackal-biographers of modern times, for his noble bones are just the kind which one might have expected them to pick. It is true that there are no pickings for them in his sexual life, but he was indisputably insane. However, they have left him alone, and 26 years have passed since the last—an admirable—biography of him by Professor Basil Williams appeared. His luck holds even in his latest biographer, for Mr. Tunstall has written an excellent book. He has proved himself already as an expert in naval history and strategy of the eighteenth century, and that is a very good preparation for anyone who undertakes to write the life of Pitt. Pitt's claim to greatness in achievement rests almost entirely upon his statesmanship in the years 1757 to 1761, that is to say upon his conduct of a great war. He was perhaps the most successful War Minister who has ever lived, and he not only controlled the Government of the country at home, but practically acted as Commander-in-Chief and Chief of General Staff both for Army and Navy. The strategy of the war was his, particularly the naval strategy, and this makes Mr. Tunstall's expert knowledge peculiarly valuable.

His judgment on the crucial point in Chatham's strategy is almost certainly correct, namely that it was not until 1743 that he began to prove himself to be a great imperial strategist. Up to that time, while he was in fact in Opposition, Chatham had been in favour only of colonial naval operations and had violently opposed all "containing operations" in Europe which were directed to forcing the French to treat Europe as the main field of operations and to the defence of Hanover. After 1743 Chatham made what appeared to be a complete *volte face*, though the completeness of it is disputable. He accepted containing operations as an integral part of English strategy, the ultimate aim of his policy, however, remaining the same. During his great years when he controlled the Government and the war, he used those operations only for one purpose, namely to immobilise the French army and navy in Europe while he stripped France of her empire and made it English.

His claims to great statesmanship in fields other than war and strategy are more doubtful. His achievement in domestic politics was negligible, yet he often showed even there flashes of clearer and broader vision than almost any of his contemporaries. For instance, when the Irish Parliament proposed to tax absentee landlords, there was a terrific outcry against the Bill from the English aristocracy, particularly the Whig noblemen. Chatham would himself have suffered under its provisions, which he thought "excessively severe," but he refused to join in the agitation against it on the following grounds, which show an extraordinary measure of political sagacity and enlightenment:

> The principle of this severity seems founded in strong Irish policy; which is to compel more of the product of the improved estates of that kingdom to be spent by the possessors there, amongst their tenants, and in their own consumptions, rather than here in England, and in foreign parts. England, it is evident, profits by draining Ireland of the vast incomes spent here from that country. But I could not, as a peer of England, advise the King on principles of indirect, accidental English policy, to reject a tax on absentees sent over here, as the genuine desire of the Commons of Ireland, acting in their proper and exclusive sphere, and exercising their inherent, exclusive right, by raising supplies in the manner they judge best.

There were similar flashes of statesmanship in his treatment of Wilkes and Liberty and the question of reform, but, as we said, his actual achievements in internal politics were negligible. This is only to say that his immense gifts were, except for the great years of his war administration, tragically wasted. This was clearly due in large part to the illness which dogged him almost throughout his life and which was apparently a type of intermittent insanity. He was a great orator and a man of genius—a superior man, as all his contemporaries admitted. His disease itself at periods gave him almost superhuman energy, and during

such bursts of activity he was able to prove himself to be one of the greatest of statesman. But at other times his mood varied from crazy instability to the long lethargy of abysmal melancholia.

LEONARD WOOLF

A TUDOR CLASSIC

The Mirror for Magistrates. Edited by LILY B. CAMPBELL. *Cambridge University Press.* 42*s.*

The Mirror for Magistrates is a famous work and one which played a great part in its day, both in entertaining the reading public and in influencing literary taste and performance. Everybody with any pretence to education has heard of it; but few can have any idea what sort of thing it is. It was a collective work, designed to follow on the heels of Lydgate's *Fall of Princes*, with a series of tragic stories out of English history of the fall of various great persons, kings and otherwise, illustrating certain political morals and giving entertainment and instruction together. The Tudor reading public, which liked hearing about great persons as much as, perhaps if possible even more than the public of to-day, took the book to its heart and called for edition after edition. With each one it was expanded and enlarged, changed a little, the prose dialogue connecting each poem altered or added to: all which makes the bibliography of the *Mirror* extremely complicated, and the establishment of the text difficult. Hence this large, fat volume of over five hundred outsize pages and sixty pages of Introduction, admirably edited by Professor Lily B. Campbell and expensively, but beautifully, produced by the Cambridge University Press. Miss Campbell has had the run of a very rare set of first editions of the *Mirror* in the Huntington Library; and so this is by way of being a standard, a definitive text.

The *Mirror*, with its tales of Richard II, Owen Glendower, Richard of York, Suffolk and Jack Cade, Richard III, appealed strongly to the interest in history, particularly that of the disturbed and recent past out of which the Tudor monarchy emerged, that marked the public of their day. The *Mirror* was a sort of poetic counterpart to Hall's Chronicle, upon which for its facts it was based, and in part to Holinshed, who himself had some small connection with the group of men who contributed to the *Mirror*. It in turn enormously influenced the dramatists later: no less than thirty historical plays are indebted to it, including the English history plays of Shakespeare, which bear witness to it at many points. A good reading man, Shakespeare had thoroughly read and digested the *Mirror*. No wonder it had the *réclame* it had.

The plan of the work was conceived in the reign of Edward VI; it was held up from appearing during the interval of Mary's rule, but was brought out in successive parts under Elizabeth. What is remarkable is the tenacity with which the original plan, conceived apparently by William Baldwin, was carried out by different editors over a period of twenty years. They were indeed an interesting group of men who carried it out: Baldwin himself, a writer of talent in various veins, pamphleteer, poet, playwright, who turned minister and preacher in the end, which brought his literary career to an end; George Ferrers, Thomas Phaer, the translator, Thomas Churchyard, prolific jack-of-all-trades in Elizabethan letters. Most important of all was Thomas Sackville, who contributed his "Induction" and "Complaint of Henry Duke of Buckingham."

Sackville's "Induction" is the most famous of all early Elizabethan poems—a sort of *Waste Land* in its influence on later poets—and on the strength of it some critics have regarded him as the most important poet between Chaucer and Spenser. Beautiful as the poem undoubtedly is, this is, I think, to underrate Skelton, who was more wholly a poet by nature, and perhaps even Wyatt and Surrey. At any rate, after this and his part in the tragedy *Gorboduc*, Sackville took to politics; and with such success that he made a large fortune—"Fillsack" the Elizabethans called him—became Lord Treasurer and Earl of Dorset. The greatness of Knole is founded upon him. As usual, politics paid better than poetry.

This edition of the *Mirror* will be of value to all students of English literature, and especially to those interested alike in the development of the history plays of Shakespeare and in the dominant Tudor attitude on the question of authority and social order. It was, of course, entirely authoritarian—though at the same time it had a strain of anti-despotism. It stood for that ideal of efficient popular monarchy which the Tudors exemplified, and Shakespeare expressed all through his plays.

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BIOGRAPHY OF A MIND

George Santayana. By GEORGE W. HOWGATE. *Oxford Press.* 16*s.*

The man of the world and the recluse supply the conflicting elements in George Santayana's nature, but the system into which he has resolved them is that of the recluse who has the whole of the world at his disposal. It is doubtful if such a system has, as Mr. Howgate claims for it, "great significance for the modern world": and although the humanistic attitude, the charm of his style and the poetic range of his imagination suggest much that is of value, it is Santayana the essayist and the critic whose voice attracts. Santayana the philosopher remains somewhat beyond our reach. Referring to *The Life of Reason*, Mr. Howgate remarks:

> It makes too little of the social, economic, and political pressure which the increasingly gregarious habits of mankind have generated and which, like an incubus, has come to plague its maker. It is essentially a way of life for an individual whose place in the world is as secure and fortunate as that of an Athenian aristocrat at Pericles' court.

The perfected individual, the ghost which haunts all of Santayana's writing, appears the more spectral and the less significant because he fails to recognise the importance of this "pressure." Speculative philosophy, however charming its voice, however ingenious its pronouncements, attains significance only when that "pressure" is brought to bear upon it. Otherwise the good life remains, what for most of us it is, a dream contained within the processes of history.

This does not invalidate Santayana's thought within the sphere in which he has chosen to work: but it is largely because that work has lacked attention in the greater arena, where it might be modified by critical attention and presented in continually new terms, that it seems so undeservedly ineffectual. The most accurate and profound statements, or systems of life, will be lacking in significance and force so long as they remain applicable only to the aristocrat of Pericles' court, and, good though this study is, Mr. Howgate so often fails to interpret Santayana's thought except at its own aristocratic level: even when he takes issue with the philosopher, it is upon the master's own terms and in the master's own language. The work is too rarely brought into an area where verification is possible: "Most lovely is nature when viewed in its lyrical essence." That is Santayana's own thought, not an interpretation of it.

What Mr. Howgate does is less to show us what unique contribution Santayana has made to modern thought, than to reveal the sources of the Catholic and materialist contributions to Santayana's mind and to explain, where possible, the uniqueness of that mind. He does not, however, bring that mind, once the influences have been absorbed, into contact with modern thought again; by which process alone can we judge the "uniqueness" of Santayana's contribution to it.

What Mr. Howgate has failed to do would have been valuable, but what he has done is none the less valuable. Such an analysis and study had for some time been required: and he has brilliantly revealed the underlying unity of which the poet, the critic, the essayist, the metaphysician—Santayana is all of these—are manifestations. To any further study of Santayana this book will be indispensable.

H. B. MALLALIEU

Sea Power and the Next War. By COMMANDER BELL. *Longmans.* 6*s.*

Commander Bell's provoking little study of sea power in a future conflict—as stimulating and as interesting as it may prove to the expert—is, unfortunately, more likely to bewilder and perplex than to enlighten the general reader. An iconoclastic delight in "debunking" all the cherished tenets of orthodox naval strategy, from Mahan to Castex, induces him to overstate an arguable, if one-sided, case and thus to convey a wholly erroneous conception both of the situation in the World War, upon which he bases himself to the exclusion of all previous experience, and of the general character of sea power and naval strategy. According to Commander Bell, the World War has definitely dethroned sea power as a military factor. Battles, as far as they have occurred, have not only been indecisive, but, above all, even if decided, would have altered little or nothing in the general development of events. Thus, if the German Fleet had succeeded in beating the Grand Fleet at Jutland, this, in Commander Bell's opinion, would neither have enabled them to blockade Great Britain in her turn, nor to sever her communications with France in the Channel, nor, above all, to conduct a large-scale invasion against her. Although naval battles might, therefore, still be expected, they would prove equally inconclusive, and the efficiency and importance of sea power depend exclusively upon the degree of economic pressure which it would enable to bring to bear upon the enemy; dependent, in its turn, not so much upon the actual strength available as upon the advantage of geographical position, such as that enjoyed by Great Britain over Germany during the World War.

Shorn of its overstatements as well as of an unhappy tendency to illustrate its points by erroneous parallels from land warfare, the kernel of truth in Commander Bell's observations amounts approximately to this: thanks to the immense increase in the strength of coastal defence, in particular through the advent of aircraft, command of the sea by close blockade of the enemy's naval bases, as in former wars, is no longer practicable—although Admiral Castex's idea of a turtle-backed battleship might possibly restore that capacity to a large extent. To establish at least a working control over the enemy's main forces, the vital importance of which Commander Bell underrates, it is necessary to base oneself upon a geographically advantageous position, both out of immediate reach of enemy bombers and so situated as to control the lines of communication running towards him, or towards his immediate neighbours. But that does not mean that such a position can in any way dispense with superior strength, nor that the loss of such supremacy in battle would prove any whit less disastrous than in former times.

This eccentric onesidedness of outlook is equally conspicuous in Commander Bell's analyses of probable conflicts, which take up the second half of his study. In the case of a war with Japan he rightly comes to the conclusion that the British Fleet, assumed to be almost wholly concentrated in the Far East (?), would have little chance of making any impression upon the Japanese position; but his review of the economic position of Japan in case of a blockade leaves out too many important factors to be convincing. Similarly, his reviews of conflicts with Germany and Italy respectively are apt to dismiss the possibilities of fleet actions, and even of combined operations, far too easily. Significantly, the question how, in the absence of a commanding geographical position like that of the British Isles over the North Sea, the Italian battle fleet could be controlled, is not even touched upon—while his economic surveys, forming on the whole the best part of his work, in particular when recapitulating the lessons of the World War (Ch. V), are of necessity too general and vague to be more than a collection of useful and suggestive hints.

The People's Year Book, 1939. *C.W.S.* 3*s.* cloth; 1*s.* paper.

This handy annual shows no falling off from the high standard it has maintained for a good many years past. It contains all the usual features—including the latest facts and figures in the development of the British Co-operative Movement, summary accounts of the progress of co-operation in other countries, and a number of short articles by experts on particular co-operative questions and on social and economic conditions. Amongst these, "Problems of Juvenile Employment" by Professor Jewkes, and "The Universities and the Co-operative Movement" by Prof. Sargant Florence, are of special interest. The Consumers' Movement in Great Britain continues its steady growth. The aggregate membership of all the stores now tops the 8 million mark (8,084,990 in 1937, the latest year shown, as against 7,807,942 in 1936—and just over 3,000,000 in 1914). That is a figure that co-operators may justly be proud of, even though a considerable proportion of this total (perhaps a million) represents duplicated membership of one sort or another and not effective purchasing membership. The C.W.S., too, registers a similar satisfactory progress. And it records also, we are glad to see, the conclusion, after long negotiations, of a conciliation agreement with 33 important Trade Unions, which covers more than 50,000 workers, and should do much to put the relations of the Society and its employees on a sound footing.

Room to Swing a Cat. By FREDERICK J. BELL. *Longmans.* $3.

This is not a humorous book about cats but a serious account of the early life and exploits of the United States Navy—the short but glorious career of Captain Paul Jones, battles with Barbary pirates and the conditions under which the men lived and fought, which is really the most interesting part of the book. The engagements of Jones and Decatur and the other U.S. naval heroes, supplied with imaginary dialogue, remind one rather of Hollywood history, although it is refreshing to read a book about the sea in which the British Navy is not the inevitable hero. Imaginary drawings of the various actions, drawn to look as much like photographs as possible, give rather a fake antique impression, and one feels that contemporary illustrations would have been far more satisfactory. For an English reader this is an interesting and unusual book.

Solitude and Society. By NICOLAS BERDYAEV. *Geoffrey Bles.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

Dialectic is the key-word for M. Berdyaev's new study—a Christian dialectic, yet with recognisable affinities with Marxian thought, with the same complexity, the same subtlety of approach and expression. The "existential philosophy" of which Berdyaev is the exponent could only have come out of Russia; and to those for whom Christian philosophy means Augustine and Aquinas and the whole Western tradition, this book will be largely incomprehensible, or where comprehensible, alarming. The clear-cut distinctions, the categories of Western thought, are lacking; we are confronted instead by a philosophic pessimism crystallised in such phrases as the following: "There is no essential affinity between revelation and knowledge"; "the subjective approach is the only one likely to elicit a revelation of the original truth contained in primitive Being"; "the objective world is a degraded

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and spell-bound world." This metaphysical despair, if we may so term it, is extended to the personal life of the philosopher, and a dark picture is suggested of his "tragic situation" in face of the spiritual unrest of the modern world. The problem which Berdyaev attempts to deal with is the problem of the terrifying solitude which is the direct result of spiritual contact between men. Here is a key, it is suggested, to the situation of which modern man is becoming more and more aware, and from which he cannot hope to escape by merely identifying himself with secular ideals. But the key, if key it is, will be accessible only to the few. No one would wish to deny the brilliance and complexity of Berdyaev's analysis. Its difficulty and almost wilful obscurity of expression will confine its influence to the professional philosopher.

From My African Notebook. By ALBERT SCHWEITZER. *Allen and Unwin.* 5s.

The village of Trader Horn, where Dr. Schweitzer writes his anecdotes, is situated on a small hill called Adolinanongo, which means "looking out over the peoples." His stories introduce a wide range of old natives ("the white man's an artful fellow") and new (one called Crisis). Some of them are quite amusing, but there is no really fresh contribution to taboo and magic. The most interesting fact that does emerge is the way the voodoo racket is being worked by European astrologers who now do a big mail order business with jungle dwellers. Dr. Schweitzer sees a great danger in this to the prestige of the white man: the Fleet Street horoscope has not the infallibility of the witch doctor's herb fire!

GRAMOPHONE NOTES

GABRIEL FAURÉ'S *Requiem* was written in 1886, immediately after the death of his father. In France it is rightly regarded as a classic, but in England, like so many masterpieces of French music, it has made little headway, and the H.M.V. recording has been for some time deleted from the English catalogue. Those who heard the performance given at Queen's Hall last autumn under Mlle. Boulanger's direction, will recall the deep impression made by the modesty, sincerity and serenity of this music. It has been called a Chamber Requiem, and the score might well be inscribed with Couperin's motto "Plus fait douceur que violence"; it seems to be saturated with the spirit of contemplative Catholicism and I am surprised to learn that the composer did not count himself a believer. The *Sanctus* shows the natural Catholicism of his approach to the sacred text; where Bach, the sturdy Lutheran, fills the heavens with magnificent rolling waves of antiphonal sound, Fauré muses in solitude on the inner mystery of the Divine holiness. Against soft organ chords and harp arpeggios, the sopranos enter *pianissimo* with a flowing theme which never ventures far but always returns humbly upon itself; as each limb of this theme passes over to the male voices it is accompanied by a muted violin descant, like a fine ray of sunlight striking down through the clerestory. The effect is out of all proportion to the simplicity of the means which produce it. One of the secrets of Fauré's art is his ability to produce a sense of endless, effortless flow; another is his extreme skill and taste in modulation. His longest and smoothest periods are liable to slip, unheralded, into a remote key—and often straight back again as though nothing has happened. There are several beautiful instances of this device in the final number of the *Requiem*, the blissful *In Paradisum*, where a conception which in clumsier hands would suggest a Christmas card is developed by Fauré into music of angelic felicity and consolation, an undisturbed song of pure content. But surely those lapping arpeggios in the opening bars belong to the flute and not to the celesta? This lapse of taste (if I am correct, for I write without the score) is the only serious blot on the five Columbia records which contain the complete work and were made in the Cathedral of St. Jean at Lyons by the Cathedral choir and a local orchestra conducted by Mons. E. Bourmauck. As a piece of recording the set is uncommonly successful: in spite of the resonance to be expected in a cathedral performance the parts do not blur and the balance between choir and orchestra is excellent. Of the two soloists the soprano is the better and she makes a very moving thing out of her prayer *Pie Jesu*. (Columbia, by the way, issue a leaflet containing a detailed musical analysis but lacking the one thing we all want: the words. How obstinate the companies are!) On the whole, I think that those who know and love the music may order this set with confidence, and I urge those who do not know it to give it a trial: it is music to live with.

"I have no hesitation," says Tovey, "in setting Dvorak's Second Symphony along with the C major Symphony of Schubert and the four symphonies of Brahms as among the greatest and purest examples in this art-form since Beethoven"; and, speaking from the apprentices' bench, I have no hesitation in applauding the verdict of our English Hans Sachs. Both Schubert and Dvorak still need defence against the Beckmessers of musical criticism, though the essential sublimity of Schubert's large instrumental works is now widely recognised; but the task of persuading people to see the nobility of Dvorak's best work is all the harder because, for some mysterious reason, he did develop in later years a purely picturesque and episodic style of composition. But this *D minor Symphony* (composed in 1885) is never episodic; on the contrary the better one knows it the more subtle and convincing does the design show itself to be; and it is only picturesque in the sense that Dvorak's themes always suggest rusticity and the open air. The tunes in this symphony are alternately noble and captivating, and their treatment masterly; but its structural beauties have been obscured by the fact that Dvorak was "a master of the long meandering sentence" whose genius lay rather in what the Germans call *Fortspinnung* than in that hammering away at melodic snippets which is the only sort of "development" recognised by our Beckmessers. Although written for the Royal Philharmonic Society the symphony has been shamefully neglected over here, and the admirable performance by the Prague Philharmonic under Talich now recorded on five H.M.V. discs should help to restore to the repertory a work that ought never to have been dropped.

Another symphony far too good to have fallen into neglect is Schubert's *B flat, No.* 5, a trim and delicious specimen which dates from his eighteenth year. Weingartner and Beecham have recently revived it at Queen's Hall, and the latter has now recorded his highly characteristic interpretation with the L.P.O. on 3½ Columbia records. Last year I reviewed the Telefunken set conducted by Hans von Benda, which gets the music neatly on to six sides; but good though it is it cannot quite compete with Beecham's subtle nuancing in music which suits him to perfection. Toscanini, on a single H.M.V., persuades the B.B.C. Orchestra to play the overture to *Die Zauberflöte* with a virtuosity, speed and attack which would have astonished Schikaneder's suburban audience: a brilliant performance, but even Toscanini cannot get perfect unanimity in that difficult semiquaver phrase for the first violins in the fifth bar of the introduction. Weingartner adds a flawless performance of the *Fidelio* overture to his impressive list

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	13	Macbeth	6.45	5.20	
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Sun.	25	Le Nozze di Figaro	5.30	3.45	to length
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	28	Così fan Tutte	6.45	5.20	formance.
	30	Don Pasquale	5.15	3.45	
JULY	1	Macbeth	6.15	4.45	
Sun.	2	Don Pasquale	5.30	3.45	
	3	Così fan Tutte	6.45	5.20	
	4	Don Pasquale	6.45	5.20	
	5	Le Nozze di Figaro	6.45	5.20	
	6	Don Giovanni	6.45	5.20	
	7	Macbeth	6.45	5.20	
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Sun.	9	Così fan Tutte	5.30	3.45	
	11	Le Nozze di Figaro	6.45	5.20	
	12	Don Pasquale	6.45	5.20	
	13	Macbeth	6.45	5.20	
	14	Don Giovanni	6.45	5.20	
	15	Così fan Tutte	6.15	4.45	

The Sunday audiences must by law consist only of members of the Glyndebourne Sunday Opera Club and also of their guests, who need not be members; to become a member of this Club there is no extra Club subscription. Application forms on request.
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of Beethoven (L.P.O., single Col.), and gets a cleaner reproduction than Bruno Walter did on his H.M.V. record with the B.B.C. Orchestra. The Busch Chamber Players, on two 10-inch H.M.V.s, make a charming record of Mozart's youthful and gay *Serenata Notturna*, K.239; but all the movements overlap awkwardly, whereas the Boyd Neel players fitted the music perfectly on to three 12-inch sides, one movement to each. This month's Boyd Neel recording is a single Decca containing two samples of the slighter Delius: the *Air and Dance* of 1915 and *Two Aquarelles*, which is a transcription, made by Fenby with the composer's approval, of his wordless unaccompanied choruses "to be sung of a summer night on the water." Two further Deccas contain a performance by the Grinke Trio of John Ireland's *Phantasie Trio in A minor*, an early work and the first which the composer regards as truly representative. It is likeable music, well made in the Brahmsian tradition and showing plenty of thematic invention. One wonders why the composer declined from so promising a beginning to the tricky manner of his later works.

Taken as a whole the month's issues are so unhackneyed in choice and so splendid in quality that my notes must run the risk of monotony in praising them all. The piano records are particularly outstanding. First mention must go to two small H.M.V. discs which contain a great and hitherto unrecorded work of the last year of Schubert's life, the *Characteristic Allegro in A minor*, which the publisher christened (not inappropriately) *Lebensstürme*. It is played in masterly style by the Schnabels, father and son, and with all the rhythmic poise and tonal beauty which Artur Schnabel seems to reserve for his Schubert performances: would that all his Beethoven playing were quite on this level. As for the music, it is unusually watertight in structure and full of the true Schubertian nobility and pathos: the second subject would melt a stone. Beethoven's *Waldstein Sonata* is included, of course, in one of the Schnabel volumes: I have not heard the records, but I have heard him play it in the flesh, and do not remember to have found the experience half so thrilling as listening to the new records by Walter Gieseking (3 Columbias, with one of the *Bagatelles* as a fill-up). The *Waldstein* is for Beethoven an unusually pianistic work, and in the great final Rondo Gieseking gives a performance of electrifying and consummate virtuosity. I expected perfect evenness of touch, but the dramatic power and eloquence of his playing surprised me. The recording represents about the peak of piano reproduction, magnificently clear and deep in tone. Another brilliant Columbia issue brings us three records of Scarlatti Sonatas played by Robert Casadesus. It has become customary to deplore all piano transcriptions of this harpsichord music, but when the piano is a light dry-toned Pleyel and the pianist has such nimbleness of finger and purity of style as Casadesus, the result can only be called enchanting. The sonatas are nearly all new to the gramophone, and they have a fascination which never palls: in spite of the echoes of the street (guitars, castanets, popular songs) which ring through his music, Scarlatti is an aristocrat among composers; he never insists or underlines, and his texture suggests the pebbly clarity of a fine white Burgundy. The recording is admirable, and perhaps LX 778 is the pick of the three. Eileen Joyce, always original in her choice of music, introduces us to *Three Fantastic Dances* by the Soviet composer Shostakovich, very pleasant to listen to and rather in the vein of Schumann brought up to date (there is a distinct echo of *Vögel als Prophet* about one of them); on the other side she gives a dazzling performance of a D'Albert *Scherzo* (Parlophone). Well behind all these in the matter of recording is the complete set of the 27 Chopin *Etudes* played by Raoul Koczalski on seven Deccas—if one can judge by the single record which has been sent to me (LX 6121). But the playing is highly sensitive, and I recommend this particular disc because it is the only one which contains all three of the very beautiful and neglected *Nouvelles Etudes* (the reverse contains the A minor "Winter Wind.") Vocal records next month.

DESMOND SHAWE-TAYLOR

Week-end Competitions

No. 468

Set by Graham Bell

More use might be made these days of the parody in propaganda. One can imagine a telling ballad on the lines of John Gilpin beginning with "Franco was a gentleman." Or another with "What shall we do with the starving Spaniards," or "How pleasant to know Dr. Funk." A first prize of Two Guineas and a second prize of Half a Guinea are offered for topical parodies on similar lines. They should not run to more than 16 lines.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, Feb. 24th.
2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.
3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.
4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 466

Set by Yahoo

The *Daily Express* announced the death of Yeats under the headline: Scoffed At Fairies, But They Made His Living. Competitors are invited to submit headlines summarising in an equally felicitous style the achievements of any other great poet. Prizes of Two Guineas and Half a Guinea are offered for the best set of three suggestions.

Report by Yahoo

The headlines that provoked this competition may well be thought to create a new low-level record in English journalism. Even to-day only an English-speaking country could produce, and swallow, such inanity. But many of the competitors failed to plumb the depths of Yahooism required. In trying to assess the entries, I looked first for verisimilitude and vulgarity; inaccuracy gained an extra mark, and the *non sequitur* was specially applauded. (Uschebtq was remarkable for this: "Wrote Nature Poems Yet Visited Paris," and "Wrote Idylls Of The King But Ennobled By Queen Victoria." H. T. S. also had a stunner, "Admired Skylark Although A Vegetarian.") Here is a selection of entries that I specially appreciated: the first two refer to Kipling and Brooke:

Soldiers' Hero, Never In A Scrap (John Stevenson).
He Thanked God For War (Mrs. M. Dixon).
Drowned Yachtsman Writer Friend of Lord Byron (W. H. Black).
Record-Breaking Plagiarist, But The World's Best Seller (Pax).
Brought Paradise To Millions: Pioneer Of Divorce.
Made Pile As Playwright: Could Not Spell His Own Name. (T. A. Brett).
Wore Coronet But Preferred Kind Hearts (E. W. Fordham).
Baronet's "Red" Heir Found Drowned: Second Wife's Amazing Story (E. M. S.).
Wimbledon Babies Lose a Friend. Red-Haired Poet And Pedestrian Passes On.
Staggering Romance Of Lovely Invalid. Devotion To Dog Recalled (J. G. H.).
Puzzle-Poet's Death: Elopement Scandal Recalled (Mrs. M. Dixon).
Don Juan Who Wrote "Don Juan" (Sorn).
Taught Bible Stories In Record-Length Poems (M. Christopher).
Baronet's Drowned Son Was Skylark Oder (Cosmo).
Ex-Druggist Poet Craved Sensation: Painted Throat With Pepper (G. T.).
"Let Me Love" Says Dean Of St. Paul's (J. M. Stoddart).
Wrote Like An Angel, Now Joins Them.
His Purse Trash But Leaves Plenty (P. G. Haughney).
Owed To The Nightingale—His Fame
Wrote Maud; And Was Made A Lord (Yorick).
Dean Of Paul's Appals Bishops (C. J. L. Price).
Was Puritan, But Chose Nude Heroine For Masterpiece (Wog).
Cricketer's Grandsire Poet Read To Queen Victoria.
Wished Milton Alive: Danced With Daffodils (Uplift).
Old Etonian Who Wrote Epic Of Ploughman (Redling).
Public-School Poet Dies, Fighting For Reds (Marbrus).
Wrote Of Love And Passion—But Died Childless (Owen Lawton).
Sold Postage Stamps To Pay For Illicit Love (David Brock).

As part of the charm of the last four is their inaccuracy, perhaps I had better explain that they refer to Gray, Byron, Byron and Wordsworth.

After much consideration I recommend that the prize money be divided between the seven competitors whose entries are printed below. If Lord Beaverbrook wishes to enlarge his staff, I shall be glad to put him in touch with them.

Stratford Mourns Local Bard Who Made Good Acted In His Own Plays.

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Rates and all information on page 261

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INDEX

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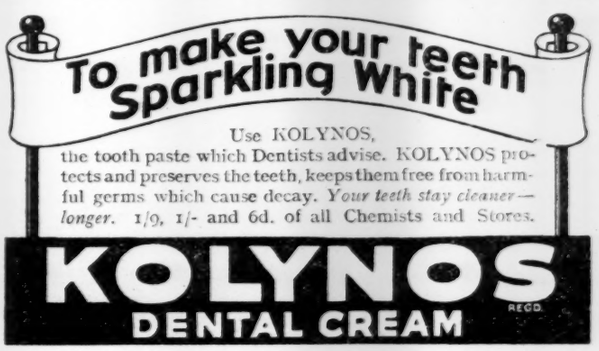
THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION
10 Great Turnstile, London, W.C.1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Eloped With Rich Man's Daughter: Then Love Lyrics Won Him Wealth. (Basil Drennan)
Man Who Loved An Earl.
Was Secret Lover Left A Bed?
Poacher Held Horses And Wrote Thirty-Seven Plays. (W. A. Rathkey)

CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

PROBLEM 320.—HIS OWN INVENTION

"It's a very simple cipher," said the White Knight, "A *very* simple cipher. I invented it myself."

"Well, *I* can't make it out," said Alice.

"Can't you?" said the White Knight. His foolish eyes glistened with pleasure. "You're the very first one that couldn't.

"I'll show you," he went on eagerly. "Look, here's something written in my cipher:

43111 31323
79026 71747

It's something *you* know all about, let me tell you."

"Now how do we get that way? Well, here's the key. There are twenty-six what-is-its—twenty-six, I mean, that don't want too many figures—and twenty-six letters of the alphabet. Savvy? So we just write 'em down in order and then start the alphabet anywhere. And there we are!"

"But do you reckon—?" began Alice.

"For the purpose of my cipher, yes," said the White Knight. "Yes, I do. Otherwise, you see, there wouldn't be twenty-six of 'em, and that would make it awkward."

Decipher the White Knight's message.

PROBLEM 318.—WE WERE RACKING OUR BRAINS.

Solution by J. C. Litton.

A prime number which is equal to the sum of two squares can be expressed in the form $4n+1$. There are 34 primes of this form between 100 and 500. Splitting these up into their two squares, it is found that 10^2 occurs 7 times* and no other square more than 5 times.

∴ 10 must be the number named by Walter.

The 7 primes are

101, 109, 149, 181, 269, 389, 461

Of these 269 is the only one whose digital total is 8.

∴ *George's motor car number is* 269.

* This is the point which several solvers overlooked. There are seven participants in the conversation, and each of them, after the first square had been mentioned, suggested a *different* second square.

PROBLEM 317.—CARNATIONS

A set of Low's cartoons goes to: N. C. Lambourne, The Cottage, Park Road East, Uxbridge.

Six points are awarded. CALIBAN

PRIZES FOR PROBLEM SOLVERS

A set of Low's cartoons is awarded to the sender of a correct solution selected at random.

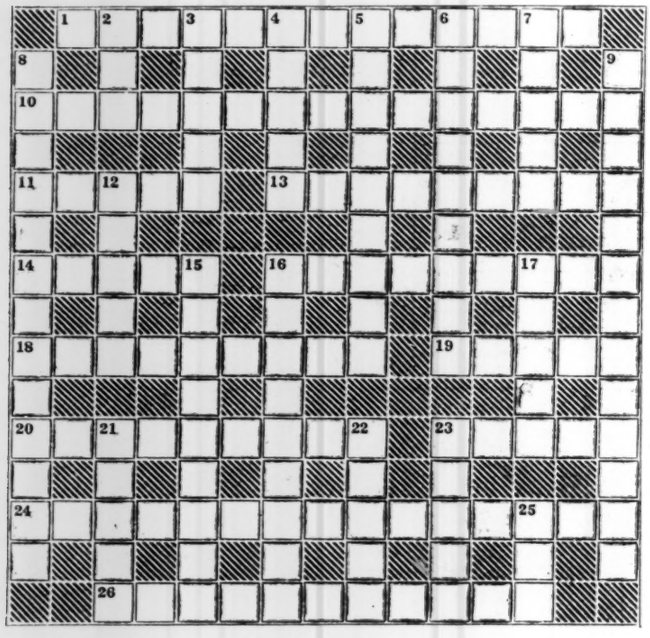
In addition, a record is kept of correct solutions sent, and of the points scored weekly by solvers. On attaining 100 points a solver is entitled to a prize consisting of any book (or books) reviewed or advertised in these columns, of a value not greater than 10*s*. Solvers who have won a prize on this basis are eligible for a second prize on attaining a further 120 points, and for a third prize on attaining a further 150. Solutions must be addressed to CALIBAN, c/o the Editor, and must reach this office not later than Tuesday week following publication of the problem. Solutions to two problems may be sent in one envelope, but on separate sheets of paper.

Some indication should be given of the method of solution.

[U.S.A. Competitors. The Editor regrets that the prizes offered in our Week-end Competitions cannot apply to American competitors.]

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 467

Books to the value of Five Shillings may be chosen by the sender of the first correct solution opened. Post solutions to arrive not later than first delivery Wednesday following the date of issue, addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, London, W.C.1.



Set by L.-S.

The last week's winner is

Dr. Jessie Blundun, Montclair, Silverdale Road, Burgess Hill, Sussex

ACROSS

1. What the spider wished to show the fly? (13)
10. Stanley Weyman's description of the Cardinal's whereabouts. (15)
11. Rulers in the undiscovered New World. (3)
13. Recanted in a pamphlet no doubt. (9)
14. Discovered in a cab eleven days ago. (5)
16. Perhaps the coon is ill, and so there was an accident. (9)
18. The Coming Scots. (9)
19. What a lark one could have here. (5)
20. Judge of a bitter R.A. (9)
23. A youngster who shoots. (5)
24. Not the same as a Battle Royal. (15)
26. This is not a bicycle lamp. (11)

DOWN

2 and 25. Fervent, in either kind of spirit. (3) (3)
3. They are never common people. (5)
4. We go first, she follows. (5)
5. Things speed up when they are opened. (9)
6. Oriental writers no doubt take a dip in it. (9)
7. Knock - out first and last. (5)
8. Orchestra stalls? (13)
9. Headlamps presumably. (13)
12. Topping in the dairy. (5)
15. How the castle was prepared for war. (9)
16. Pass over the artillery. (9)
17. Location of little Johnny's head. (5)
21. Comes from Ebury. (5)
22. Expiry of a lease. (5)
23 (rev.) Hazardous opinion. (5)
25. See 2.

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

M	O	U	N	T	A	I	N	B	A	T	T	E	R	Y
I	■	N	■	O	■	N	■	U	■	H	■	M	■	E
D	I	N	N	E	R	T	A	B	L	E	■	E	L	L
L	■	E	■	C	■	H	■	B	■	P	■	T	■	L
A	I	R	R	A	C	E	■	L	E	O	N	I	N	E
N	■	V	■	P	■	F	■	E	■	L	■	C	■	D
D	I	E	■	■	■	I	R	A	T	E	■	■	■	■
S	■	D	■	A	■	R	■	N	■	S	■	H	■	B
■	■	■	■	S	E	S	O	D	■	■	■	O	A	R
A	■	B	■	S	■	T	■	S	■	P	■	M	■	I
T	W	O	D	E	E	P	■	Q	U	A	V	E	R	S
T	■	U	■	S	■	L	■	U	■	S	■	T	■	T
E	A	R	■	S	L	A	D	E	S	C	H	O	O	L
S	■	N	■	O	■	C	■	A	■	A	■	W	■	E
T	H	E	G	R	E	E	K	K	A	L	E	N	D	S

APPOINTMENTS VACANT & WANTED

THE UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL.

JOINT COMMITTEE ON TUTORIAL CLASSES
APPOINTMENT OF STAFF TUTOR

The University Council invites applications for the post of Staff-Tutor in adult education for organising and teaching work in South-West Lancashire at a salary from £350 to £400 per annum, according to qualifications, together with superannuation benefits.

The appointment will date from August 1st, 1939, and will be for a period of three years and probationary for the first year.

A statement of the duties of the post and the conditions of appointment may be obtained from the undersigned, to whom applications accompanied by no more than two testimonials and the names of three referees should be addressed before February 25th, 1939.

STANLEY DUMBELL,
Registrar.

Feb., 1939.

WEST RIDING COUNTY COUNCIL
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.

Applications are invited from qualified women for appointment as SUPERVISOR OF MEALS. The duties will be mainly connected with the provision of meals at Children's Meals Centres and at Elementary Schools and other educational institutions, and the person appointed will be required to advise on questions of diet, staffing, equipment and general organisation. Candidates should have experience in large scale catering and expert knowledge of dietetics, and should give proof of administrative and organising ability. An appropriate degree will be a recommendation. Salary £300-£15-£400. The post is pensionable. Married women are ordinarily ineligible.

Application forms, with further particulars and conditions of appointment, to be obtained from the Education Officer, County Hall, Wakefield, to whom they should be returned not later than 6th March, 1939.

INDIAN POLICE.

In 1939 it is proposed to recruit for this Service by competitive examination and by selection without competitive examination. No guarantee can be given that recruitment by competitive examination will be continued after 1940.

Candidates must be British subjects of non-Asiatic domicile.

Seventeen appointments will be made (if so many candidates be found suitable), two-thirds on the results of a competitive examination to be held in conjunction with that for the Burma Police (Class I) and for cadetships in the Army and Air Force commencing on June 27th, 1939, and the remainder by selection without competitive examination.

Candidates for appointment by examination must be over 19 and under 21 years of age on August 1st, 1939; those for appointment by selection must be over 21 and under 23 years of age on August 1st, 1939, and must be graduates of an approved University.

One appointment to the Burma Police (Class I) will also be made by competitive examination.

Full particulars and forms of application may be obtained from the SECRETARY, Services and General Department, India Office, Whitehall, S.W.1, or, in the case of appointments to be filled by selection, the Appointments Boards of Universities in the British Isles.

Completed forms of application must reach the India Office *not later than April 1st*, 1939.

INDIA OFFICE,
February, 1939.

THE INDIAN CIVIL SERVICE AND BURMA CIVIL SERVICE (CLASS I).

The entry for the Indian Civil Service and for the Burma Civil Service (Class I) closes this year on April 11th. The recruitment of Europeans will be partly by selection and partly by written competitive examination. A candidate is at liberty to apply for appointment by both methods, but a separate form must be used for each. Forms may be obtained from the Services Department at the India Office or from the Appointments Boards of Universities in the British Isles. The age limits are 21–24 on August 1st. Candidates for appointment by selection without written examination must have taken a good Honours Degree, but those who are sitting for their Final Honours Schools this year may be admitted provisionally. Full particulars can be had by applying to the Services Department at the India Office, Whitehall, London, S.W.1.

INDIA OFFICE,
February, 1939.

ABERDEEN Public Library. Applications are invited from Male Associates or Fellows of the Library Association, over thirty years of age, for the post of Sub-Librarian. Salary £300-£360: superannuation. Applicants should have practical experience in classification and cataloguing. Applications with copies of testimonials should be addressed to the Librarian, Aberdeen Public Library, not later than Saturday, 4th March. Canvassing will lead to disqualification.

APPLICATIONS are invited for the post of Research Officer to the Tyneside Council of Social Service. Applicants must have a suitable University Degree and some experience of social research. Commencing salary £250 per annum. For further information apply to THE DIRECTOR, 17 Ellison Place, Newcastle-on-Tyne, 1, enclosing stamped addressed envelope.

OXFORD. Lady Margaret Hall. Applications are invited for a SENIOR SCHOLARSHIP of the maximum value of £100 per annum for a woman graduate wishing to read for an Oxford research degree or to pursue some other definite course of research. Applications by April 15th. Further particulars from the Hall Secretary.

WANTED English Master, to teach English language and literature and, if possible, some elementary science, for resident Training School in Scotland for German refugee boys and girls, ages 14 to 17. Board of Education Teachers' Certificate desirable but not essential. Salary according to experience and qualifications. Write the SECRETARY, Whittingehame Farm School, Ltd., 312 St. James's Square, London, S.W.1.

LEISURE is well spent in reading for a DEGREE

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Wolsey Hall, Oxford

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APPOINTMENTS—continued

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REQUIRED half-day cook help, 3 to 8 p.m. Non-Jewess, small family, Central London. Box 4131.

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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By DIVES

IN THE DOLDRUMS—RUBBER QUOTA DECISION—
LONDON DEPARTMENT STORES

RARELY have the stock markets been so idle. Wall Street has been reporting the smallest volume of turnover on record for years and Throgmorton Street has been so quiet as to be reminiscent of a Sunday afternoon. Not that the revival of political confidence, which was apparent last week, has evaporated, but it appears that the number of investors who felt more cheerful about the international outlook was not sufficient to carry markets to much higher prices. Perhaps the pause indicates the desire to wait upon further news from Spain and Mussolini. Domestic news this week has provided no basis for an improvement in business. The Courtaulds dividend was 4 per cent., against 10½ per cent. in 1937, which confirmed the worst fears. The home railway earnings so far published gave the market no grounds for bullishness. It is expected that the chairmen at the annual meetings will stress the seriousness of the present decline in traffics in order to underline their case for a "square deal." If I were to hold any home railway stock I would prefer Southern Railway. The question of an increase in London Passenger fares will come before the Railway Rates Tribunal in March. If an increase is granted the Southern Railway will derive substantial benefit from the London Suburban Pool, a benefit estimated at an amount equivalent to ¾ per cent. on the 5 per cent. preferred ordinary stock. Southern preference and preferred ordinary stocks are at present quoted on attractive yield bases :

	Present Price	Yield %
Southern Railway 5% preference	91	£5 10 0
Southern Railway 5% preferred ordinary stock	61½	£8 2 9†

† Only 4½ per cent. was earned in 1938.

* * *

Westinghouse Brake and Signal Company, which I have recommended in the past, had a satisfactory report to show for the year ending September, 1938. Earnings were equal to over 32 per cent. on the capital and dividends were maintained at 17½ per cent. The company is thus building up a strong financial position. Nevertheless the shares are now unpopular in the market because the foreign business of the company represents a large proportion (perhaps 50 per cent.) of its total sales. Actually the company's most important customers are the home railways. I would say that the market's anxiety about Westinghouse foreign business is exaggerated. It has now completed 86 per cent. of its deliveries under the Polish brake contract and 67 per cent. of its deliveries under the Lithuanian brake contract. The company will undoubtedly benefit from the increase proposed in the facilities of the Export Credit Guarantee Department. Since the report the shares have fallen back to 49/3 and now return a dividend yield of £7 2s. per cent. and an earnings yield of over 13 per cent.

* * *

The International Rubber Committee's decision to maintain during the April-June quarter the present 50 per cent. export quota was welcomed by holders of stocks of the commodity. An increase in the quota to 55 per cent. would undoubtedly have resulted in a fall in the price of rubber to 7½*d.*, at best. As it is, spot rubber has advanced—not sensationally—from 7¾*d.* to 8*d.* per lb., with May deliveries quoted at 8⅛*d.* From the point of view of Mincing Lane this is satisfactory. Whether the International Committee is serving, on a long view, the best interests of the plantations is another matter. Hitherto the Committee's policy has appeared to be aimed at the maintenance of a manageable stock position. Now, world stocks at the end of 1938 amounted to 457,000 tons. Given the 50 per cent. January-June export quota, fresh supplies are unlikely to exceed 425,000 tons. United States consumption in January exceeded 46,000 tons. If this rate could be maintained for the whole of the half-year, world consumption in that period would top the 500,000 ton mark. Such a calculation is possibly too optimistic ; sales of automobiles in the U.S.A. are reported to be falling behind production. Even so, a forecast of 485,000 tons as the half-year's in-take will probably prove not unduly sanguine. That would mean that end-June stocks would be under 400,000 tons, or less than the equivalent of five months' consumption. That may spell 9*d.* rubber—a consummation pleasing to the market in the short run, but attained at the cost of forgoing the chance, which an enlarged quota would have afforded, of reducing output costs in the estates.

* * *

The substantial fall which has taken place during the past six months in the market valuation of London store shares is a reflection of the belief that the 7.3 per cent. decline in Central and West End retail turnover recorded last year must have affected profit margins adversely. The results now published, first, by Dickens and Jones—a Harrods subsidiary—and subsequently by Harrods itself, confirm the correctness of that anticipation. Dickens and Jones show earnings of £106,893, against £125,097, and the dividend is reduced from 12½ to 10 per cent. In the case of Harrods, profits have fallen from £817,802 to £738,191, and the decline would have been more severe had it not been for the fact that the accounts include an extra £18,000 from D. H. Evans' increased 1937-38 distribution. Even so, Harrods is distributing only 16 per cent., as compared with 18½ per cent. paid in each of the past two years. I give below a sample list of prices and yields :

	High 1938	Present Price	% Earned	% Paid	Gross Yield % on Div.
Barker, John & Co. £1	73/9	53/6	29.8	15	£5 12 0
Debenhams 1/- ..	4/1½	2 7½	40.7	20.83	£7 18 9
Harrods £1 stk. ..	76/6	60 -	19.0 (approx.)	16	£5 6 9
Selfridge Provincial Stores Ordy. stk. £1	7/6	4/4½	*2.2	*1.5	—

* Actual earnings and dividends for 5 months ended Jan. 31st, 1938.

The good results achieved by D. H. Evans in 1937-38 have been repeated in 1938-39. Profits have risen from £137,778 to £143,800 and the dividend is stepped up from 12 to 13 per cent. This is helpful to Harrods, but I suspect that D. H. Evans is an exception in the general trend. Both Harrods and Barkers seem to be fully valued at present prices ; Debenham's capital structure is highly geared ; and Selfridge Provincial must be regarded as speculative. Central London Department stores are faced with two bear factors—reduced upper-middle-class purchasing power and increased competition from improved suburban shops, whose patrons escape the fatigues of traffic congestion in the West End.

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This Trust adds to the usual benefits of a Unit Trust the safety secured by reserve fund accumulation. It pays five-sixths of the income every half year to the unit holders and reinvests one-sixth for their benefit. By this method it gives unit holders advantages of compound interest, as the growing reserve fund increases the capital value and revenue of the Trust.

£100 invested in 1912 in the thirty-seven largest dividend-paying companies in the different fields of British Industry, and managed on the lines of this Trust, would at the end of 1937 have been worth upwards of £258. Without reserve fund accumulation it would have been worth £176.

The fund is invested in the ordinary shares of the best British industrial companies.

On the basis of current prices and distributions the anticipated yield exceeds £5 12 0 per cent. This would mean an initial distribution to unit holders at the rate of £4 13 4 per cent. gross per annum, and the allocation of the equivalent of 18/8 per cent. to reserve.

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Chairman : Hartley Withers

165 MOORGATE, LONDON, E.C.2. (NATional 4931)

Company Meeting

GAS LIGHT & COKE COMPANY

SIR DAVID MILNE-WATSON'S ADDRESS

THE Two Hundred and Thirty-second Ordinary General Meeting of the Gas Light and Coke Company was held on February 10th at Gas Industry House, London.

Sir David Milne-Watson, Bt., LL.D., D.L., the Governor, presided.

The Secretary (Mr. Brian Wood), having read the notice convening the meeting,

The Governor commenced by expressing regret at the loss the Company had sustained by the death of Mr. Fooks, adding that his place had been taken by Mr. C. W. L. P. Reed. He also referred with regret to the death of Mr. Galbraith, the late Secretary.

Continuing, he said: Ladies and gentlemen, we will now take the accounts. On the capital account you will see that we have spent altogether £960,000, £17,000 of which was on land, £96,000 on buildings and machinery, £172,000 on mains and service pipes, £352,000 on meters, and £323,000 on appliances. Against these we have written off £838,000, making a net increase in capital of £122,000. During the year it has not been necessary for the Company to issue any further stock.

RESULT OF YEAR'S WORKING

The result of the working of the year is as follows: The balance transferred from the revenue account to the net revenue account is £2,066,000, as against £2,050,000 for the previous year. This balance, after allowing for interest and dividends distributed in respect of the June half-year, leaves a sum of £802,000. This enables the directors to recommend the usual dividend on the 3¾ per cent. Redeemable Preference stock, 1970, the 4 per cent. Consolidated Preference stock, and the 3½ per cent. maximum stock, and a dividend (unchanged) at the rate of £5 12s. per cent. per annum on the Ordinary stock. The payment of these dividends, together with the necessary contribution of £20,000 to the redemption fund, will absorb £748,000, leaving £54,000 to be carried forward to the credit of the current year's accounts, as against £102,000 carried forward last year.

INCREASED COST OF COAL

At the end of the year the directors found it necessary, with great regret, to announce a forthcoming increase in the price of gas. During the past year the company has been using coal purchased under contracts dated 1935. Since then the price of coal has risen substantially. Our former contracts have run out and our company has from now on to bear a very heavily increased cost. It is impossible to adopt the policy of allowing the coal industry virtually to impose what price increases it thinks fit, and then to complain when the costs of other things directly dependent upon coal rise, too. The public has to pay in terms of the price of gas, of electricity, and of a vast range of industrial products in whose manufacture coal is an important factor.

You can imagine that it may be a temptation to put off the evil day by reducing some essential expenditure such as our provision for the proper maintenance and renewal of plant. But a company which takes that easy way out jeopardises its own future and paves the way for a slow decline that is certain, though it may not be outwardly visible. I am convinced that the directors' decision is the right one in the interest of continued efficiency and of the extension and ultimate cheapening of the vital service which we provide for the community.

Before leaving this question of the price of gas, let me put the whole matter in perspective once more by reminding you that our increase means an addition to the gas bill of the average London working-class household of 1½*d.* a week and of three-farthings a week to the Old Age Pensioner or anyone in similar circumstances. We have postponed the increase to the last possible moment, and during the recent cold spells the consumers have been getting gas at the old price, although we are paying more for the coal.

EFFECT OF WEATHER CONDITIONS

The year that has just closed was from our point of view a most extraordinary one. In March, and again in November, temperatures were quite abnormally high. I am satisfied from a study of the figures that in these temperature conditions a drop in sales of only a little over 1 per cent. shows that our business as a whole continues to expand.

In support of my view I may point to the remarkable output figures which were achieved during the blizzard just before Christmas, although the temperature and the conditions were by no means a record even in comparatively recent years. The figures of gas output broke all records, on five consecutive days we beat our previous record day, and on Wednesday, December 21st, we reached the remarkable peak of 265,000,000 cubic feet, 17,000,000 cubic feet above our previous record, and by far the largest amount of gas ever supplied in a single day by any undertaking in the world.

The number of cookers, hotplates and gas rings in the district increased by over 42,000; fires, radiators, etc., by 23,000; water heaters by over 45,000; wash coppers by 16,000; and refrigerators by 11,000.

The technical development of gas central heating has proceeded rapidly in recent years, and with the coming of special tariffs, enabling gas to compete with other fuels, a considerable number of houses are now centrally heated by gas.

We put in new installations for Odhams Press, the *Daily Sketch*, and *Daily Mirror*, which, added to those I have told you about in previous years, means that almost the whole of the great newspapers in London are now on our list. In addition, our successes cover such diverse buildings as 10 and 11 Downing Street, Sadler's Wells Theatre, Wembley Stadium, the Stock Exchange, the latest block of flats in Park Lane (Fountain House), the Office of Works building in Kingsway (Victory House), and last, and perhaps most notable of all, the new buildings erected by the Institution of Heating and Ventilating Engineers. This last is a tribute indeed. We need not look for any better evidence of the intrinsic merits of gas for central heating and central hot water supplies, nor of the great field for development which awaits us, than the fact that a body of specialist experts in the heating of buildings and houses should have selected gas central heating for its own corporate use.

KENSAL HOUSE SCHEME

As you know, Kensal House is in one aspect a demonstration of what we consider to be the ideal fuel service for working-class dwellings. It was opened in the beginning of 1937, and during 1938 we have seen the idea begin to extend.

The London County Council have decided to conduct an important experiment on a large scale, based upon the Kensal House scheme, and, in addition, some 10 or 12 large private building estates have adopted the Kensal House system practically in its entirety, and estates built by the borough councils of Chelsea, Paddington, Stoke Newington, Islington, and Westminster have adopted some of its most important features.

The smoke abatement campaign has achieved during the 12 months since I spoke to you a success which surpasses our expectations. We have had support from authoritative quarters in all parts of the country and are particularly gratified that the campaign earned the blessing of the Minister of Health himself, Mr. Walter Elliot, and the Leader of the London County Council, Mr. Herbert Morrison, who expressed in the most direct terms the Council's resolve to do whatever it could, both as a great local authority and as one of the largest landlords in the country, to clean our skies and our homes.

A little later the First Commissioner of Works, Sir Philip Sassoon, reported to the House of Commons that Whitehall was no longer to be "Blackhall" and that every fireplace in the Government offices, as well as many of those in the House of Commons itself, were to be smokeless this winter. Smoke abatement is also one of the reasons why the Kensal House idea has been winning so ready an acceptance.

THE IMPORTANCE OF COKE

The past ten years has seen a very great improvement in the quality and standardisation of coke sold and also in the range and efficiency of coke-burning appliances. This progress is the direct result of technical research and marketing organisation carried out under the auspices of the London and Counties Coke Association.

As a result the production of coke for sale in the South has increased during this period by nearly 1,000,000 tons, representing some 2,000,000 tons of additional coal carbonised. Besides the obvious uses of coke for domestic grates, kitchen boilers, and large-scale central heating and water heating, new and important markets have been developed for special purposes connected with agriculture; 200,000 tons of coke are now used for grass drying, and this total is increasing. Other uses are the heating of orchards as a protection against frosts during the season when the fruit is setting and warming the soil. In addition, interesting experiments are now under way for the lifting of fog from aerodromes through the use of banks of coke braziers.

Perhaps it may not be out of place if I take this opportunity of offering to the great public authority under whose supervision we operate, the London County Council, our warmest congratulations on the Jubilee which it will soon celebrate. The list of matters in which we and they have common interests and concern would probably surprise you by its length, and over this whole field of day-to-day discussion and co-operation there operates a spirit of practical good will though neither party slackens its zeal for the proper performance of its own function.

In conclusion, the thanks of the directors are due to all grades in the company's service for their devotion to duty during the past year.

The report and accounts were adopted.

An Extraordinary General Meeting was then held to consider a resolution approving the London Gas Undertakings (Regulations) Bill now before Parliament. The Governor, after briefly explaining the Bill, moved the resolution, which was seconded and carried unanimously.